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German Literature

By

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, WITH NOTES
BY THOMAS GORDON.

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GERMAN LITERATURE.

POETRY.

(CONTINUATION.)

POETICAL PHILISTINISM.

THE a[n]cient, the romantic, and the modern, were all united in Goethe. The ancient being of course favoured only by the learned, it could not force its way among the people, so that the taste for, and imitation of it, visibly declined. On the contrary, the modern and the romantic poetry, that is, the representations of modern life, and those of the dreamy life of poetry or of the middle ages, formed the great contrast of German poetry as it has been unfolded after the days of Goethe.

That whole modern poetry is founded upon the idea that our every-day life is beautiful, and that we should be content with it, and should not hunt after the dreams of a strange or unattainable world. The romantic poetry, however, is opposed

to the prosaic and trivial side of this element; it points to a fairer past, to more ful ideals, and assists the deeper and noble of the human mind in so far as they are fied with the prose of life.

The moderns must be divided into three classes,—the Philistines, who knew of nothing upon was nobler than their domestic life, and unable happiness;—the Sentimentalists, who, lookers, commodern life only on its mournful side, and rapture and or unwilling to rid themselves of its fetters exalted monly poured forth the tears of rapture, contrary, effeminacy, for they could not feel an every-day sorrow;—and the Frivolists, who, on themselves looked upon the cheerful side of the dissipating world of the Philistines, and allowed to every license which might assist in Germany their tedium.

The contrast, however, between the poets of last century and what a great nation should be, was too striking not to be felt by the above-named Thence came it that each of the opposite so-called modern parties inclined to one side or *Gegenknöpfe* sition. Among the Philistines there were *Schrot und* German *Biedermänner, ehrliche Leute* at on the *Krautkräftige Gemüther, von alterthümlich* sterous," but *Korn*, who were not merely laughed the province stage, under the name of "Old Boi and who, in who were also justly celebrated in degraded of lyric poetry, and of the novel; and the senti- fact, enlivened in some degree the wished to feelings of the nation. From among mentalists arose the idealists, who

idealize modern life, not in accordance with classic or romantic models, but with the claims of humanity and sentimentality. The frivolists, too, formed an opposition against everything in our modern world, which reminded men of bygone times,—of the middle ages. This class consisted of the Nicolaitans, who combated not only superstition, feudalism, Catholicism, and the ancient romanticism, but also offered resistance to the modern romanticism.

We shall examine each of these in their turn.

During the period of peace which intervened between the seven years' war and the wars of the Revolution, the German was confined to the world of his mind and of his family. Prevented from taking a share in politics, he lived the more in his house; and the townsman in particular was so confirmed in his Philistinism by the pride of the governors, and the blind prejudices of the nobles, that he came to look upon it and value it first as a sweet habit, and at last as poetical. The Gallomanists and Grecomanists had, it is true, praised the country in the style of Horace, Theocritus, and Guarini, but this had always remained an ideal, Arcadian pastoral poetry. The Anglomanists had depicted modern life after the style of the English novels; in a humorous or satirical manner, however, so that their novels may be called, par excellence, the comic novels. They did not venture to trumpet forth their prosaic reality as beautiful and lovely. The elder Voss was the first who had the presumption to strut about, like a cock on his own dunghill, and,

in contempt of the nobles, to boast that his Philistine-like love of domestic life was the essence of all poetry. This was enough to raise a rebellion in the whole Philistine world. Every one now cried out,—Home, sweet home, family, grandpapa, night-cap, dear mother, green-room, we have found it! The poetry, which we sought among the French, the English, the Greeks, and all nations, it is in the midst of us, it sits in our very nurseries, at table, at the bed-side, at coffee, and at our sentimental evening smoke!

Goethe no sooner became aware of this amazing miracle, which Voss had wrought among the Philistines, than he hastened to pluck away his laurels. The celebrated Louisa, by Voss, had scarcely seen the light, when Goethe followed it with his Hermann and Dorothea. And he attained his end; for the Philistines, who had not become thoroughly reconciled to all the courtly whims of Goethe, honoured him from this moment with an unbounded devotion. He stepped among them clothed in his dressing-gown and night-cap, and from that moment the German hearts were all his own.

Both the above-mentioned epic poems, Louisa and Hermann and Dorothea, have been often imitated. The Jucunda of Kosegarten[1] has attracted some attention, though it, like the poem of Voss, only describes the quiet life of a country curate,

[1] Ludwig Gotthard Kosegarten, born at a village near Mecklenberg, February 1st, 1758; died at Greifswald, October 26th, 1818: novels,—Ido von Plessen, &c.; poems; epics; Jucunda; The Island Journey.

and possesses nothing original except the background, the island of Ruegen. I must confess, that this transplanting of our modern family cockering and weakness into the home of the old Saxon race, among the burly Marschländers[2], as by Voss, and into the romantic island of Ruegen, as by Kosegarten, has always appeared to me exceedingly repulsive. There, where the ancient power, habits, and customs of the nation had been preserved in a freer and prouder manner than in other places, there should be least modern Philistinism; and where there was still so much strong homely wit among the people, least sentimentalism; in fine, where everything is northern, there there should be least of the affectation of classicism. These were joined by Baggesen[3], the Dane, with his Parthenais, in which the sentimentality and politeness of the north became, for the first time, enamoured of the sublimity and simplicity of the Swiss nature, like an old fop with a blooming country girl. It drew men to nature, but they took all their pedantry with them, so that they could not see a cow, without immediately opening some old classic, and breaking out into raptures at finding that cows were still the same as the ancients had painted them.

A better path was opened up in South Germany. Though they could not shake themselves

[2] Those who live near the mouth of the Elbe.

[3] Jenz Immanuel Baggesen, born in Zealand, Febuary 15th, 1764; died, 1826: Parthenais; The Alpine Tour; poems; Adam and Eve, or the Fall.

free of the classic hexameters, yet Neuffer, in his Harvest Home, and Schuler[4], in his Summer, gave true and unaffected descriptions of their country life; in which a whole country, a whole nationality is reflected,—in which nature is painted in one of her most beautiful conditions, and the people in a state of joyful activity, and in their correct costumes. The Sheep-Shearing of Maler Müller, which is written in prose, is of the same kind as these, though even more natural.

The transition from pedantry to naïve poetry, was formed by Claudius[5]. The celebrated Wandsbeck Courier makes, even when read now, a strange impression,—one rather of a moving than of a pleasing nature. It is not that his beauties are not always beautiful,—that his strong common sense is not always sensible,—but the form, the style, belong to an age long past. We feel as if we saw one of our venerated progenitors leaping up from his armchair, in his high-peaked night-cap, and dancing a nuptial dance. The joke is well meant, but it is rather disagreeable. If innate good nature, and a tameness and timidity taught him by oppression, had not laid too many fetters upon the satire of the poet, he would, in consequence of his excellent talents, have arrived

[4] K. J. Schuler; alive: has now also published Autumn and Winter.

[5] Matthias Claudius, born August 15th, 1743; died January 21st, 1815: poems; songs; romances; ballads; Asmus omnia sua secum portans, or the Whole Works of the Wandsbeck Courier (a name which he assumed in consequence of having been the editor of the Wandsbecker Bote.)

at something distinguished. But Claudius was not one of those fortunate poets, who, like Lessing, Wieland, Herder, Thümmel, Rabner, or Lichtenberg, elevated themselves, partly by a better rank in society, partly by their own genius, or at least good humour, above the common necessities of a petty and dependent existence; he must rather be numbered with those, who, like Voss, Bürger, Moritz, Stilling, Schubart, Seume, could not, during their whole life, rid themselves of the feeling of restraint and oppression; and who, with all their aspirations after freedom, and with all their contempt of destiny, bore upon their foreheads the Cain-like mark of banishment, and of awkwardness. It is necessary to read the Wandsbeck Courier, Salzmann's Human Misery, the Anton Reiser by Moritz, Stilling's Life, the poems of Bürger, Schubart, Pfeffel, and Seume; Sebaldus Nothanker, Sophia's Tours, and the novels of Müller of Itzehoe, to understand why Goethe then endeavoured to ingratiate himself into the more independent and pleasant society of the nobles, whose prejudices he has palliated in Wilhelm Meister, solely because he had too good an opportunity of feeling his own advantage, when compared with the oppressed life of the citizens of that age. Yet one song of Claudius, the celebrated Rhine-wine song, will live for ever in the mouths of the people. To the same class belongs the well-known song of Usteri, *Freut euch des Lebens* (Enjoy Life).

Voss endeavoured to destroy lyric poetry. He composed domestic songs for every event which

occurs in the family, or in the house, as well as songs for the dairy-maids to sing when milking, the object of all which songs was the praise of home,—sweet home. In this he was imitated by the army-chaplain Schmidt, who, in a village of Brandenburg, amidst a barren country, and among the most uncivilized boors, undertook to praise the deep poetry of a home in the country:

Ye fops, turn up your noses and look big,
While I, in plain and homely fashion, wear
My only coat till it becomes threadbare,
And my wife dresses my old periwig.

Or:

O how pleasant, when, with long whip of willow,
The little gooscherd his goslings, a sprightly company, drives by.

Goethe has, as is well known, ridiculed this painter of nature in a masterly manner in the poem, The Muses and Graces in the Mask. In this department, too, a better way was struck out in South Germany. Family life was raised to the higher power of patriotism. Hebel[6], in his Allemanic Poems, sought for the idyllic under the guise of a beautiful patriotism, and gave it the most natural poetical garment by rejecting, not only the ancient measure, but also the classic high-German, and speaking the beautiful dialect of the Black Forest. Yet he did not deny that

[6] Johann Peter Hebel, born at Baden, May 11th, 1760; died September 22nd, 1826: Allemanic Poems; Poems in the Swabian Dialect; Songs of the Rhine.

he took refuge in this beautiful country merely to escape the age of the periwigs. But he took the periwigs with him; so that the more excellent, nay, I may even say, the more immortal, several of his poems are, the more disagreeable are others in which we find nothing but the temporary and ridiculous Philistinism of his age. He often puts sentiments and phrases in the mouths of peasants of the Black Forest, which lie far above the sphere of their conceptions and feelings; he often makes servile allusions, showing that he is an official,—a course of proceeding which interrupts the idyl in a manner truly disgusting and political. Yet the poems in which blunders of this kind do not occur, in which the illusion of a beautiful nationality is not destroyed, are of high and imperishable value. No one has so truly and beautifully expressed the modesty of German hospitality, the cordiality with which the Germans resign themselves, where they place confidence, the morality which is free of all boasting,—that naturalness which is so free of all prudery, and the innate true-heartedness of this people. In this way our mountaineers, our simple family life, are sanctified by the primitive charm of innocence, of a beautiful natural disposition, of a pure morality, a simple and lovely dress. The descriptions of gentlemen, of the social life corrupted by tasteless fashions and prejudices, pretensions and affectations, cannot be compared with them.

Hebel has been often imitated. The best is by Castelli, in the dialect of Lower Austria; the

worst by Hoffmann von Fallersleben[7], once an amiable writer, who, a north German who had never seen Swabia, took it into his head to write Allemanic (Swabian) poems like Hebel. The good comedies of Wagner, in the Würtemberg dialect, belong more to the province of satires; as do many similar local farces of Frankfort, Strasburg, and Wien.

The stage, too, did its utmost to wheedle the Philistines into the pit. German pictures of customs, family pieces, dramas of domestic life, became the rage. The lovely Minna von Barnhelm, of Lessing, had shown that German life might be introduced on the stage. Gemmingen[8] introduced The German Father, and Iffland[9], soon after, the German Philistinism, in all its varieties, upon the boards. Everything became common-place prose —contents as well as language. Nothing more was heard of the stiff Alexandrines, of the puppet plays (*Haupt- und Staats-action*), of wonderful destinies and tragic passions. The heroes of the German stage now spoke simple and honest Ger-

[7] (Heinrich August) Hoffmann von Fallersleben, born at Fallersleben in Lüneburg, April 2nd, 1798; alive; professor of German language and literature in Breslau: songs and ballads; Fragments from Otfried; Horæ Belgicæ, containing old Flemish poems; Old German Leaves; Swabian (Allemanic) Poems; Book of Love.

[8] Otto Heinrich Freiherr von Gemmingen, born 1738; died at Wien, 1800: Deutsche Hausvater, &c. &c. &c.

[9] August Wilhelm Iffland, born at Hameh, April 19th, 1759; died at Berlin, September 22nd, 1814; director of the national theatre: The Hunters; The Bachelor's Harvest Home; about thirty volumes of plays.

man prose; they were no longer Roman emperors, ancient gods, or Turkish viziers, but German court-councillors, and councillors of the chamber of commerce, curates, bailiffs, joiners, &c.

Schiller justly asked—"What noble action can be done by these wretches? what great thing can happen by their instrumentality? Everything depended upon petty family occurrences, domestic want, poverty, provincial prejudices; so that if this narrow circle even took any interest in the great affairs of public life, it did so only when a liveried servant arrived, who brought a gracious letter to the hero of the piece; or, at the very utmost, the prince himself entered incognito, lifted his mantle, showed his face, and turned the old blusterer, arrested the intriguer, and married the young couple. The base feature of the whole of this kind of poetry is, that the great interests of a nation are crumpled up into the petty ones of a sentimental provincial town (*Krähwinkel*).

Domestic pictures like these might pass off as idyls, were it not that this illusion is destroyed by the prose of titles and of etiquette. Consistency with nature is the characteristic of an idyl. Domestic life, simple innocent love, may, in the form of an idyl, afford room for the highest magic of poetical charm. But this cannot take place in the over-loading of our Philistinism. These admit merely of a comic conception; nay, the only object they serve in poetry, is, to afford matter for ridicule. I will not speak ill of the modern servants of the state in prose, but they, with their civil-uniforms and long titles, are utterly worthless

in poetry. How can a man ever fancy anything heroic, manly, or noble, as we do of a Percy or Quentin Durward, in a German tutor; or anything loving, enthusiastic, or dreaming, as of Romeo, in a German upper-land-assessor (*Oberlandes-gerichts-assessor*) or tax-inspector. And more so with the women. Can a justice-councilloress (*Justiz-räthin*), a general-superintendent's wife (*Generalsuperintendentin*), or even an actual-privy-councilloress (*wirkliche-geheime-räthin*), be a Portia, a Desdemona, an Imogen, or even a Phædra? Impossible. She can figure only in a comic novel as a caricature, as the representative of a fashion, which, if still new, is of old date. She belongs to the province of the ridiculous; her title excludes her for ever from that of the moving and sublime. German titles were introduced dead-born into poetry, like abortions into the world, and woe to the poet or poetess who attempts to breathe a poetical life into these dead monsters.

Such descriptions are most fatal when they are not true, when the modern civil uniforms are filled with excessive virtue and sentiment—with that romantic delicacy which is found in real life. It is only when this is avoided, when men are painted as they are, with all their little foibles, prejudices, and vulgarities, that such pictures possess an historical merit as being true mirrors of their age. This merit is, with a few sentimental exceptions, possessed by the domestic dramas of Iffland, which are, next to the works of Nicolai and Salzmann, the truest pictures

of the morals of the peruke age (*Perücken-zeit*).

Iffland has written some good plays, which approximate to the poetical delicacy of idyls, in so far as they depict men, and which in style approach nearer to nature,—as The Huntsman; or when they delineate the human heart and the German mind as opposed to a corrupted political state, as in The Advocates, and The Liability to Serve (*Dienst-pflicht*). Thus Iffland left the ranks of the real Philistines, and joined that of the 'German honest men,'—thus approaching to Schubart's Opposition and Schiller's Cabal and Love.

The pure Philistine tone is seldom visible in the later dramas and comedies; they commonly wander away into the realm of the sentimental and frivolous, where Kotzebue gave the key-note.

Philistinism has found the most comfortable home in the novel, which, like a roomy sofa, was best fitted to receive its wide hoop-petticoat. Without returning to the historical principle and the extensive horizon of the Island Felsenburg and of Simplicissimus, and without retaining the refined comic characteristics of the Anglomania, men were pleased with the most insipid descriptions and praises of every-day life; and the novel allowed the author to cast away the interest of a struggle along with its relations,—an interest which the stage had to retain, if it did not wish to appear tiresome. The novels were even tamer than the dramas of domestic life.

The great number of wretched family novels was preceded by some good ones,—a proof, that what was looked upon as the superiority and characteristic of this kind of novels, viz. the night-caps, the silly loyal tameness, the womanishness, was nothing but a degeneracy which is indeed tremendous.

It required some time to expel the better spirit which had been introduced by the Anglomania. This is the reason that so many of our older novels are so excellent. Hermes caused his Sophia to come, during her tedious Tour, into contact with all ranks, and by so doing gave an excellent picture of the age. Hippel gave a masterly picture of the educated; Müller of Itzehoe of the uneducated portion of the country gentry. The Siegfried von Lindenberg of the latter, will, though far from being a masterpiece in our literature, always be a very interesting relic of antiquity,—a picture as true as it is curious of the customs of his age. The silly country squires, the wise schoolmasters, and the various green and brown geniuses, are really true children of that age,—real personages, such as could not be matched by any other age, or by all the rest of the world; and yet, withal, they are not so individual, that there is not a considerable quantity of German national spirit pictured in these tragi-comical figures. It is said that Napoleon had the novels of the German La Fontaine in his library,—doubtless because he considered them the representatives of German weak-heartedness, whining, weakness, and abasement. I should have advised

him to take also Siegfried von Lindenberg, for in it he might have seen that the Germans, though they did not shed tears and whine, but, on the contrary, laughed and were coarse, remained just as stupid as before. It would have been a pleasure quite according to Napoleon's own kind, to find the principal causes of the German decay, —weeping sentimentality and clownishness; honest, but easily over-reached,—so well described in two of our poets. That he had a presentiment of this is probable from the desire which he expressed when in Italy and Egypt, to lead an army into the green, fat, good-hearted, but stupid Germany. Have the Germans changed since that time? We cannot prove it, yet we may guess. The German milk has stood too long not to have at last become sour.

The protestant clergy were described in the Sebaldus Nothanker of Nicolai, the schoolmaster, in the Spitzbart of Schummel, and the tutors, in Kaskorbi, (a work which is spoken of in the second volume,) much more truly, and in a far more definite relation to the sum of our nationality and our public life, than was done in the affected idyls of Voss and Kosegarten, or in the life of a poor country curate by La Fontaine.

Lorenz Starck, by Engel,[1] was the best description of the higher, Anton Reiser, by Moritz[2],

[1] Johann Jacob Engel, born at Parchim, in Mecklenburg, September 11th, 1741; died June 28th, 1802: Lorenz Starck; The Page; Mirror for Princes; Ideas on Mimicry.

[2] Karl Philipp Moritz, born at Harnelm, September 15th, 1757; died January 20th, 1793: Writings in the German

of the lower life in towns. The latter of these two works is one of the most remarkable phenomena in our literature. In it Moritz described his own life; how he from an orphan boy became first a hatter's boy, next an actor, and at last a professor in Berlin. Yet his adventures are far less interesting than the description of his feelings upon their occurrence, than the acute psychological remarks. In this respect it is directly connected with the life of the well-known spectre-seer, Jung Stilling, which is told in the form of a novel. He was a country boy, he learned the trade of a tailor, and at last became the most celebrated oculist in Germany,—a favourite author of the quietists in the country.

Unless we read all the novels here mentioned, we can form no perfect idea of the state of German morals during the last century. There are many more which are less distinguished, yet which are all better than the sentimental novels which came after them; thus there were many novels which, being mirrors of the age, should serve as warnings. Of these, Julchen Grünthal, a boarding-school story, has become the most celebrated; there are also comic stories, for example, the story of the Stout Gentleman, in which the proverb, "Jack gets on by his stupidity," is cleverly brought in, and the age of routine, and of favour oppressing merit, are well

Language; A Prosody; Travels of a German in England; in Italy, in 1776-78; Anton Reiser, a psychological novel; Andreas Hartknopf, an allegory.

conceived. There are also the witty Tour to Braunschweig, by Knigge, &c.

Within a short period, two poets have arisen in South Germany who hold by the old plan of giving a faithful picture of customs, yet without falling into the affectation of sentimentality; and, like the epic poets Neuffer and Schuler, the lyric poets Hebel and Castelli, Ulrich Hegner and Bührlen, have in their novels shown an acquaintance with the popular character, and have, by means of the sentimental character of the popular feeling of Southern Germany, imparted a higher charm to the simple life of a private gentleman.

Ulrich Hegner[3] has written like a connoisseur on Holbein, and on the treasures of art which are in Paris, but his principal works are novels. His great talent consists in acute powers of observation, and the mirror-like clearness with which he, in his quiet and amiable way, reflects the scenes of life,—pictures of travel just as they occur. He uses no poetical adornment in painting the real, the common, or the common-place, yet he possesses the knack of giving significance even to the most unimportant objects. In this he often reminds us of Goethe, who was the acknowledged master of this kind of painting; yet we do not wish to offend his modesty by this comparison. It never occurs to him to attach

[3] Ulrich Hegner, born at Winterthur in 1759; alive there: Saly's Revolution; Life of Hans Holbein the younger; I too was in Paris; Molkencur; Susan's Marriage.

importance to the unimportant, merely because he says it; his simplicity is not artificial; he seems as if he were speaking quietly to himself, so that his expressions possess a naïveté which they never would have had, had they been intended to be overheard. I must recommend the picture of the customs of the period of the Swiss revolution, namely, The Days of the Revolution of Saly, as the best of his works, for in it we see all the peculiar and amiable qualities of its author. In it he gives free scope to his inborn disposition; the subject is one which exactly suits his talent. The descriptions of life in Switzerland, which he has given in this work, are as true and beautiful as they are unique of their kind, yet their lovely truth is, beyond all doubt, surpassed by the beautiful poetry which the same author has given in his Molkencur (Whey-cure). In fact, we know no novel which can be compared with The Days of the Revolution of Saly, except, perhaps, Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield.

An author, near akin to him, is Bührlen[4], a native of Ulm, who, in his Pictures of the Black Forest, in his tales, and in his novel of the Enthusiast, has shown as much talent in describing still-life,—the modest world of the peasant and citizen.

I must dwell a little upon these authors, for they show us the great difference between true

[4] Friedrich Ludwig Bührlen, born at Ulm, September 10th, 1777; alive, registrar in Stuttgart: Views of Life; Pictures of the Black Forest; Stuttgart and its Environs.

pictures of manners and the literature of the Philistines' life; even the modest life of our peasants and townspeople is full of poetry, if we but view it without prejudice, easily satisfied, and unassuming,—if we are infantine and Homeric enough to have a true perception of the poetical. One would almost think that the thousands and tens of thousands of our poets are doing all they can to conceal the beauties of real life, as a talented man[5] maintained, that language was invented not to express but to conceal our thoughts. What pains, for example, some hundreds of our modern German authoresses take in delineating characters which are so hollow, unnatural, and false, that they never occur even in the very scum of society, but are found only in the diseased and corrupted imaginations of their authors; whilst in life, crowds of real men pass before the eyes of every reader,—men, whose varied characters need but acute observation to present a picture which would far surpass all that romantic nonsense of poetry. Let any reader look around him amidst the circle of his female acquaintance, and then ask himself if he do not discover among them characters, and in every character numerous individual traits, which are poetical in a high degree, and which, if not beautiful, are at least piquant; and then let him compare the results of his own experience, limited though it may be, with the unnatural and sorry uniformity of the heroines of romance! he will then be inclined to

[5] Talleyrand.

say, that in this respect we are no better than the Tartar hordes of Asia, which worship idols of the most frightful appearance, whilst their own bodies are distinguished for their handsome shape.

But the connection which exists among our various castes of poets is so strong, that not one of a thousand can rid himself of his prejudices and school habits, so as to be able to compare whether the water of the Hippocrene still tastes like the mountain spring, or whether it has not become tea among our lands? Such an one is therefore not much worth, and Hippel and Hegner, for example, stand modestly in the background of German belles lettres, like patches of blue sky behind the holes in the roof of the poetical barn in which Hogarth shows us the strolling actresses dressing.

The Enthusiast is Bührlen's best novel: this description of customs is one of the most beautiful which we possess. The poet has taken the finest traits of life, and has sketched them with that humorous sentimentality which the Germans and English alone possess. The character of the Enthusiast is truly national. This contrast between enthusiasm and domestic cares, between romanticism and Philistinism, pervades the whole being of Germany. That thing which now ranges amidst the highest regions of the world of spirits with the holy feelings of an angel, or the commanding eye of a god, and that which within one little hour must eat, drink, and pull off its own boots,—the tragi-comical sublime,—

ridiculous double nature of man, is the eternal incitement to humour. The Germans possess a peculiar inclination for contrasting the ideal and real tendencies—an inclination which must be sought, not merely in his rich mind and feelings, which embrace all the contrasts of sentiment and spirit, but in the age, in the course of outward events. The discord between imaginary ideals and reality, has never been so great as in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Nothing can be more repugnant to the romantic feelings of our heart than our certificates of baptism, our infant-schools, school-examinations, titles, money-making businesses, official regulations, bargains, clothes, tailors' bills, visits of ceremony, &c. Poetical humour, therefore, originated in that age in which romanticism left the helm and made way for the modern classicism of the perukes. Since that time poets have followed different paths. One party refused to acknowledge that there was any charm in the modern prose, they held fast by the ancient; and when it had ceased to exist they revived it in poetry, some becoming imitators of romanticism, others of classicism. A second party said, "let us be content with the new prose, it alone is reality, and of present use; that dreaming about by-gone times, which can never return, is quite ridiculous." The reality, with all its petty follies, began to be worshipped; the father stalking about in his calico dressing gown, the mother with her coffee-pot, became the highest objects

of German poetry; then the appointment to an office, betrothing, marriage, baptism, royal visits, jubilees, and titles, on the one hand; poverty, potatoes, robberies by domestics, spoiled children *à la* La Fontaine, bankruptcy, judges, and imprisonment *à la* Iffland, on the other.

Half-way between these imitators of poetry which was out of date, and the worshippers of the present poetry, a third class of poets endeavoured to seize upon the points of contrast between the two, and thereby to show the real truth of what is poetical in the present generation. It is but too true, for instance, that we are just as unable wholly to return to that beautiful age which is past, as to yield ourselves entirely up to the unpoetical present. These poets, therefore, seem to me to rank above the blind imitators of the past, as well as above the blind worshippers of what is onesided and petty in our age. Man does not stand only above or only in his age, he is both above it and in it; so that the question really is, not what ideals man has placed before himself, nor even how each age has unfolded itself in a onesided manner, but what relation his endeavours bear to the ideals of such an onesided age? The earth does not stand still, neither does it continue flying in one direction; it revolves both round itself and round the sun.

But the power of true morality soon threw the Germans into an apathetic state. The advantages obtained by the Anglomania were soon lost by sentimentalism. There arose a morbid desire

to defend modern customs, to become enthusiastic for them, and to nourish effeminacy in the most comfortable way, both in life and poetry.

The novels which form this transition are better in proportion as they are older.

Starke's[6] Pictures possess, like those of Iffland, an historical value, because they are true representations of their age, and are in a style of their own. In Iffland's pieces we find the old German honesty and frankness, which promoted a correct feeling, though not without pedantry, and in devout forms. This form prevails in Starke's Pictures, though in a milder and softer form; so that he is the true representative of those sentimental Germans, who, during the long peace which succeeded the seven years' war, found a heaven upon earth in the bosom of their families, in the management of a petty office or trade, in the enjoyment of some happiness and some enlightenment;—of those, too, in whose narrow idyllic circle everything great in nature and history, in church and state, in science and art, vanished into the romantic distance, or even did not exist for them; and who at first looked upon the French Revolution only in the friendly form of a Dorothea, whom Goethe devoutly married to a modern German Herrmann,—and this without ever dreaming that a new Herrmann's battle would be fought, and their idyllic cottages burned to ashes.

[6] Gotthilf Wilhelm Christoph Starke, born at Bernburg, December, 1762; died October 22nd, 1830: Pictures of Domestic Life; tales, poems, hymns, &c.

Ebert wrote novels of the same kind as those of Starke; as was likewise done by Reinbek[7], Schmiedtgen[8], Mosengeil[9], whose novels and tales, though tinged with a little sentimentalism, have always remained true to German feeling and sound reason, and bear no resemblance to the extravagances of the Werter-fever or frivolity. Of the authoresses, Henriette Hanke is the best delineator of life in general, and of the patience which women show in narrow circumstances. In her works she describes, with great refinement and plainness, not merely the petty details connected with the house, the room, and even with the clothes, but also those traits of feeling, without even straying, like many of her romantic sisters, from the path of truth into sentimentality, or from that of tenderness into that of passion.

SENTIMENTALITY.

No poetry is wholly without sentimentality. It is found even in Homer, who proved, even before the age of Sterne, that the principal charm of emotion consists in a dry style. The lyric poets, too, of the melancholy kind, were long indulged in a blubbering sentimentality, which

[7] George Reinbek, born at Berlin, October 1st, 1767: Flowers of the Muse; the Cossacks in Switzerland; Winter Flowers.

[8] Anton P. Daniel Schmiedtgen, born 176–; died September 30th, 1816: novels and tales; Love and Hypocrisy, &c.

[9] F. Mosengeil: poems and tales.

was common among our old love-singers, who carefully bedew the flowery path of poetry.

During the last century, however, many different causes combined to introduce sentimentality into the drama and the novel, nay, even to make it the ruling fashion in polite literature.

Rousseau's influence gave the external impulse, but there already existed a great susceptibility to receive its impressions. Educated Germans were at that period very much enervated; they had blunted and over-refined their nervous system, in obedience to the dictates of fashion, of new pleasures, of an excessive anxiety about doctors, and by pampering from their very childhood, as well as by a would-be gentility, which, for example, forbade any private gentleman to make a tour on foot. In addition to this, they took no interest in public affairs; there was a long peace, and the ecstasy of tears must therefore help them to dissipate their ennui. Yet many deep minds either felt a real genuine grief for the excessive sorrow of the age, or felt themselves unhappy without knowing exactly why; they felt the oppressive air of the room in which they were confined, without ever thinking of the open air without. In this way sentimentality, false as well as true, was favoured.

The broad and troubled stream of our sentimental literature welled forth pure and clear as crystal in the lyric poetry of Salis[1] and

[1] Johann Gaubenz Freiherr von Salis-Seewes, born December 26th, 1762; died in Milan, January 29th, 1834; poems.

Hölty[2], as in two crystalline tears. Their noble simplicity, their retiring modesty, and the truth of their feelings, well enable them to survive many of their celebrated successors. Verses such as *Wann, o Schicksal, wann wird endlich*[3], and *Das Grab ist tief und stille*[4], or *Süsze heilige Natur*[5], will live for ever in the mouths of the people. These two poets have a great affinity; yet the Swiss Salis is the more cheerful, the Lower Saxon Hölty the more melancholy. The latter had a very delicate constitution, and died like a prematurely blasted flower. The presentiment of death —a smiling, though sorrowful trait—pervades all his poetry; and his songs resemble a gaudy garland hung up in a country church in memory of the beloved dead, by the sight of which he was once so much moved.

As Hölty uttered his true sorrow in the simplest and tenderest expressions, Matthisson[6], who came after him, gave vent to his hypocritical sorrow in the most bombastic affectation. This celebrated Matthisson, a man with the soul of a lackey, who sought and found happiness in fawning upon literary and political magnates of every description, and who, in the number of

[2] Ludwig Heinrich Christian Hölty, born in Hanover, December 21st, 1748; died September, 1776: poems.

[3] When, O fate, when will at last.

[4] The grove is deep and still.

[5] Sweet holy nature.

[6] Friedrich von Matthisson, born near Magdeburg, January 23rd, 1761; died at Wörlitz, 1831: Die Erinnerungen; poems.

snuffboxes and rings acquired by begging, surpassed every other squire of Apollo, obtained this good fortune by taking upon himself the part of howling a little, and shedding his crocodile tears, in presence of the highest powers,—the noble and the estimable public. This lucky fellow was not destined either by nature or fate for whining and weeping, but he turned them to good account, because sentimentality had become fashionable. He therefore sat himself comfortably down after a good meal in an old ruined castle, and there spun out melancholy verses. It is told of him, that at a hunting party, after a luxurious meal, a wealthy young gentleman, who wished to get rid of him, ordered him to remain under a tree and make an elegy, until the nobles came back;—and he made the elegy. This is the reason that I find in his melancholy nothing but study,—the most disgusting hypocrisy I ever met with. His very style, which is so much praised, the elaborately polished verses, the elegant adornment, the copious introduction of pretty little arabesque images, &c., are all proofs of the falsehood of his feelings, of the void in his heart. Though he turned sorrow into an affair of trade, and though he lived in an age in which the Germans were justified in feeling a deep sorrow, yet it never occurred to Herr von Matthisson to devote a lament to his country: on the contrary, he strewed incense before Napoleon; he celebrated the festival of Diana[7]. His sorrow was never

[7] The festival of Diana was celebrated at Bebenhausen in

drawn from the woes of private life; he was the pure representation of a voluptuous ennui, the diseased affectation of conceited sloth. To bewail amidst the ruins of an ancient castle the death of its former possessor; or, when drinking the good Rhenish wine, to devote a tear to death, which he devoutly hoped might be long in making its appearance; and in doing so to lull himself with the vain hope that he will then be crowned with laurel in Elysium; that he will sit down in Anacreon's myrtle bower with Plato and the other noted men of Greece—such were the dignified objects of the sorrow of Matthisson. In addition to his poems, his Reminiscences have made a good deal of noise. In a long series of volumes he informs us how he has all his life ridden about with all kinds of noble people and celebrated scholars and poets,—how he honoured them,—how they honoured him, or at least behaved politely to him; he also gives us some of their phrases, and stupid anecdotes about them; and at last sticks all the invitation notes which he got from them around his mirror, in which he takes pleasure in looking at himself. And this fellow, intended by nature for a servant or hired mourner, has been raised to the station of a "classic poet of the Germans," for so he is always called by his foolish admirers.

Westphalia (now Hesse) in 1812, under the direction of Jerome. Such extensive arrangements had been made that no less than eight hundred and twenty-three deer, stags, wild boars, foxes, &c., were slain in a very small space.—See Weber's Letters.

Beside him is commonly placed the Canon Tiedge[8], who resembles him so much in the forms of his elegies, and in the affectation of melancholy, that many of his poems might pass as those of Matthisson. But Tiedge always meant honestly; he never dissembled with an intention to deceive, like Matthisson. His disposition was almost womanish, and it is well known that such dispositions imagine causes for emotion, that they could weep between beef and soup, that they cannot see, hear, or do a single thing without connecting something sentimental with it. This is the reason that Tiedge cannot observe a prudent moderation like Matthisson; that he has not the same command over his feelings, but that he relaxes the reins of his melancholy, and complacently bathes in the stream of tears which he himself has shed, his object being not merely to please people like Matthisson, but to infect them, to carry them all away in a stream of tears. In his Urania, he conducts this stream, like a second milky way, through the sky, explaining astronomy by amazement, rapture, and admiration at the greatness of God; by sorrow at our nothingness in his eyes; and, in fine, by tears of emotion, gratitude, and devotion.

I do not intend to say anything here of the many, nay, countless imitators of this sorrowful style. They are of importance only in the litera-

[8] Christoph August Tiedge, born at Gardelegen in the Altmark, December 14th, 1752: poems; elegies; Echo, or Alexis and Ida; novels—Amy and Robert; Wanderings through the Market of Life; Urania.

ture of devotion, and there I have already spoken of them.

Hölderlin[9] struck out a path completely original. This noble genius was overpowered by the deep-felt sorrow of the age. Before he was thirty he became insane, leaving behind him, in the noblest pictures, the memorial of his glowing sorrow. Around him he saw vulgarity, a literature governed by Kotzebue,—a nation which worshipped foreign tyrants. He therefore sung:—

Alas! the many love, what brings a market price,
And the base slave unto the powerful bends the knee.
Who on the godlike do believe,
They—they alone, are godlike.

But his better feelings, combined with an irresistible longing to advance, found no resting point, no vent in that wretched age. He therefore himself announced the mournful aberration of his mind:—

But still the blindest are
The sons of gods, because man knows his house,
And to the beast 'tis given where to dwell;
But their untutored spirits feel a want,
And whither to direct their journey know not.

Matthisson knew whither—and died in honour. He was no son of God. Hölderlin sank in the sacred night of madness, but his resurrection will be more glorious than that of Herr von Matthisson. His wonderful and deep chords bear

[9] Friedrich Hölderlin, born at Wurtemberg, 1770: Hyperion, or the Hermit in Greece; lyrical poems.

the same relation to Matthisson's versification, that Ossian's harp, lamenting amidst the storm under the rocks, does to the tinkling of a cymbal. Hölderlin's sorrow is that of a great nation; Matthisson's is that of an overfed lapdog.

Hölderlin's mind is of that rare kind which is poetical by nature,—which breathes in every manifestation of poetry, like flowers, a constant and peculiar odour. He never thinks about anything poetical; he is not at the trouble of making or creating poetry; he has it naturally. He only shoots forth sparks of that poetical fire which is burning within; he allows it to burn in artless, nay, even savage flames, till it consumes itself. His soul is a delicately strung Eolian harp, which, when first gently touched by the winds, emits the most melodious sounds, but which when seized by the storm is rent to pieces amidst frightful yet beautiful sounds. If ever a poet felt what he sang, this was the man. Every drop which composes the stream of his poetry welled forth from his inmost soul.

I must here mention another poetical passion-flower, which, like the lotus of the ancients, was sunk into the depths by love—I mean the poor Louise Brachmann[1], who extinguished the glow of her burning heart in a cold river. Her sorrow, too, was original and genuine, so that many of her lyrical poems possess true beauty, and this in a peculiar way; for, with all her sorrow, she never belies her feminine nature, nor that German mild-

[1] *Louise Caroline Brachmann*, born at Rochletz, 9th Feb., 1777; threw herself in the Saale in 1822: poems; odes.

ness which distinguishes her much to her own advantage from the Grecian Sappho. Even in her very despair she expresses herself with a devoted tenderness:—

A thousand times fervently wished I, I never had seen him,
I wished my repose back, which I, through him only, had lost;
And yet, should one of the gods kindly offer a peaceable bosom
And oblivion; my heart would choose his image and death!

Though impure hands have planted thorns and thistles on her grave, her poems bloom forth like ever-young roses, and I shall pluck one as a memorial of a finely-constituted soul. She sung of herself:—

How darest thou of thy destiny complain,
That love and sunbright joy from thee depart?
Who dares inconstant Fortune to disdain
May claim the love of every noble heart.

The outer world hides not our fortune's spring,
The lights of heaven alternate o'er the plains,
Now darkness comes, now sunshine brightening;
Still ravishing the eye, the land remains.
The magic spot is fair, though hid in night,
Or covered with a robe of golden light.

If the works of men want power, they are worthless. If the works of women do not tell of love, they are just as worthless. Nothing can be more intolerable than the cold prudery of a Therese Huber, and other Amazon authoresses, who have sworn an eternal hatred to the tender

passion, in order to become cross and old-fashioned. Yet nothing is more natural in, and more becoming to, a fair singer, than the voice of the tender heart. On this account I have always defended Louise Brachmann and Fanny Tarnow. These maidens possessed a heart which was truly feminine; they loved, and they sung what they felt.

The countess Ida Hahn-Hahn[2] struck a key which was more independent, and more courageous, yet no less tender; and this does her honour. She never closes up her heart; she gives herself entirely up to her noble feelings, and she knows too well how much the fire of poetry gains by intercourse with that of love, to separate the two. Far from representing herself as devoid of feelings, or of having dipped her feelings seven times in the water of stupid prudery, she permits them to range in their first glow and power. Yet let no one be amazed that she confesses her love so openly to all the world. There have been, and there still are, among us, learned ladies, who have wished to imitate men in learning every kind of knowledge, and who have contended that there should be no distinction of sexes. This is very tasteless. Women should not stand in the pulpit with spectacles on their nose, neither should they bear arms, or mount the professor's chair; they should leave these things to us. But they may love; they are

[2] Ida Louisa Gräfinn Hahn-Hahn. poems; Venetian Nights.

justifiable in doing so; it is a natural and beautiful trait of their character.

Or should each woman conceal her love? should she bury it in the recesses of her bosom? This is the general rule, but every rule has exceptions. One need not be altogether a Sappho, to be unable to resist the impulses of song. Why is not the nightingale quiet? There must be something which causes it to sing.

Among our modern poets, there is one in whom a sweet sorrow, a truly poetical melancholy, is manifested in the most perfect form; I mean, Lenau[3]. In no other poet do we find the longings of the heart so movingly expressed,—not in passionate wildness, or in sorrowful complaints, but in what the English call "the ecstacy of tears."

My heart is sickened with foreboding fear,
And from its trouble never shall be free;
Still something darkly whispers in my ear,
"She ne'er was destined for this earth or me!'

"The hour shall come———————
That lures her to the cypress-shaded spot,
And leads her forth, in silent feeling lost,
To thy low hillock, mossy and forgot."

"Then o'er thy grave, thy spirit hovers light,
Then dust and spirit tremble to unite;
Yet shall the maiden, by that grave's low steep,
In still emotion, silent stand—and weep."

[3] Nicolas Lenau, a pseudonyme, Freiherr von Nimptsch, a noble Austrian: poems; Faust; Savonurolo.

Many, very many, of our younger poets lean to sentimentalism; — I may mention Ferrand[4], von Tschnabuschnigg, Henriette Ottenheimer, Braun von Braunthal, Otto Graf von Loeben[5], &c.

In dramatic poetry, sentimentalism long made the emotion-plays[6] the prevailing fashion, *la comédie larmoyante*, as the corresponding kind was named in France. Iffland shows a leaning to this style in several of his plays, for example in the Bachelors, though it must be acknowledged that he commonly adhered to the life of the citizen and to honest German bluntness. Kotzebue wrote the majority of the favourite emotion-plays; but as sentimentality and frivolity were always combined in him, and as his most sentimental Misanthropy and Repentance is at the same time his most frivolous, I prefer speaking of his whole style in the following chapter.

Dramatical sentimentalism did not, however, confine itself to the modern domestic and iambic pieces, it also attached itself to the romantic tragedy. Even Schiller himself yielded to it, in a very noble sense however, in so far that they caricatured his many imitators on the stage; and Goethe's theatrical heroes did yet more mischief among the crowd of imitators by systematically

[4] Ferrand; alive: poems; odes; ballads. A later critic calls him "the tender and melodious minstrel of love."

[5] Otto Heinrich Graf von Loeben, born at Dresden, August 18th, 1786, died April 3rd, 1825: poems; The Rose Garden; Papers from the Diary of a Pious Pilgrim.

[6] *Rührspiele:* those plays which are calculated to work upon the feelings and produce tears.

clothing every weakness of the heart, vanity and sensual feeling, with the tenderest sentiments. So long as sentimentality appeared only in the common-place men and weaklings of Iffland and Kotzebue, they possessed a certain degree of naturalness. Men had either become really effeminate, or they at least worshipped sentimentalism as a prevailing fashion. Emotions, as many and as various, were affected in private life as on the stage. But the transferring of this modern effeminacy to romantic characters, and even to historical heroes, was a far greater sin against poetry. This error has become so common, that later poets have fallen into it almost involuntarily, for they found a ready-made language of this kind, the well-known phraseology of the iambic tragedies, in the track of which they could move as easily and naturally as on a railway. The craving desire to utter fine sentiments has, with the dramatic poets at least, always overcome the duty of attending to the action of the play. This is the reason that, in our dramas of every kind, the beautiful passages in which the poet wishes to show forth his own soul, so often interrupt the natural course of the play, and injure the striking traits of character. Hence arises that eternal return of sentimental phrases which occur even in the mouths of rough warriors, tyrants, and criminals. Thence comes that fatal and worthless attempt to excuse and slur over the crimes of a Don Juan, a Clavigo, a Hugo Oerindur, &c.; men who have committed every possible crime, yet who are made to

declaim like amiable and feeling souls. This is the reason that the so-called "noble lie[7]" of Kotzebue is the mournful tendency of a numerous class of works, at the head of which stands Goethe's Faust.

But not to anticipate, we shall confine ourselves to the domestic sentimentalism, and see how it has obtained a greater power in the province of the novel than of any other. Goethe's Werter and Miller's Siegwart are the most distinguished works of this class. Werter is nothing but a translation of Rousseau's Nouvelle Heloise into a German costume. It betrays the same vanity of heart, the same remorseless sporting with the feelings, the same vain sorrow. But we must examine every literary phenomenon in its historical connection with others; in doing so we cannot but see that the improper ideas about marriage which have become fashionable since the days of queen Marguerite (of Navarre), Boccacio, Ariosto, La Fontaine, Voltaire, &c., must, in the end, find a sentimental contrast, that the merry lover must be contrasted with a weeping one. The happy lover had justice done to him; the sighing one must now get his due. This new notion was particularly fitted for the moral taste of the Germans. The secret desire which wished to combat marriage had to creep into the house, like Tartuffe, amidst tears and

[7] Kotzebue said it was a noble thing to tell a lie, when by so doing we could in any way assist our friends.—See his play Die edle Lüge.

sighs; in this way decorum is not outraged, and no one knows that the weeping sentimental lovers are the most dangerous. In this manner Goethe, in Werter, while he seemed to pay external reverence to marriage, really made it hateful and repulsive by picturing it as merely prosaic, and as the unpoetical destruction of a poetical relation. All the mockery of his descriptions was directed against marriage; all the praise was accorded to the interesting, though sorrowful lover. The system which was extracted from the work, that a noble mind was exalted above all domestic duties and moral laws, became even more dangerous than French immorality, which practised vice merely as vice, and not as being a beauty, or even a virtue. From that time, it was an easy matter for any weakling to find an excuse for his pleasures. Every lover affected to be a *bel esprit*, and to look upon a connection with the wife of another as a poetical connection, in comparison to the prosaic one of the wife to the husband. Werter became exceedingly popular; one imitation succeeded another, until even the frivolity which had been hitherto dry, witty, and malicious, borrowed from it a sentimental covering, as was formerly done by Rousseau in France. When the sentimental novels began to become frivolous, even the frivolous ones became sentimental.

Werter, however, has exercised an evil influence in another way. Intelligent, educated, and moral youths have been seduced by it to that self-gallantry which is completely opposed to a mas-

culine disposition; therefore, though the work became fashionable, it must be looked upon as a national calamity. A Narcissus, who sees a mirror in everything he takes into his hand, in every object upon which he looks, and who, when practising this ogling, must either become womanish or perish, is a bad example to place before our German youth. The egotism of noble minds, who desire to be loved and worshipped for their own sake, without having deserved aught of the world or of their country, is the most dangerous disease which can attack the German youth. The so-called Werter-fever, has, it is true, given but few the death-stroke; but many others who have been infected by it, have found it the more easy to disseminate the infection,—the courtesy of the heart, the desire to become better, the unhappiness, the sickness produced by the prose of the world, the eternal assumption of right by high-bred men, and the neglect of every manly duty, the exposing of the pettiest personal vanity, and the contempt of their country, which would undoubtedly perish were such fops to get their own way. It is well known that Napoleon carried Werter about with him, as the favourite novel of the Germans; and in his opinion, not the German nation, it is true, but the generation with which he had to do, judged very correctly. The constitution of the empire afforded but few safeguards; yet the politics of external nations would never have been able to have bent us to the French yoke, had not our spirit become paralyzed, had not Herr von Goethe taught our youth, by

means of the Werter-fever, that mental degradation, which they, sitting brooding over themselves, and filled with diseased fancies, committed for their honour and their country, and which rendered them disinclined to engage in that public activity which did not promote an imaginary egotism, a mental pleasure.

This tendency of our youth has, since the days of Werter, been pictured in a great variety of novels, some of which are more proud and wrathful, as those of Heinse, who therefore went beyond the bounds of sentimentalism,—sometimes more in a lamenting and whining strain, saying that the world was too rude for their weak souls. Even within these few years a number of such novels have appeared. In place of the youth manning himself to plunge joyfully into the struggle of life, to submit with military pride to necessary discipline, and to oppose and vanquish with the pride of a hero everything repulsive, he, like a petted child who had remained too long at home, will not go out into the open air; he is cold if the window be opened; the world appears to him full of misery and horror and rudeness; he therefore flies back to the warm fire-side, and to the gaudy glitter of his childish Christmas-tree[8]. Any one who reads Hotho's Preliminary

[8] *Weihnachts-krippel.* In many parts of Germany the custom of giving and receiving presents at Christmas is still very common. Parents when giving presents to their children commonly do it in the following manner: a fir-tree is procured and placed in a room; on every branch is hung conserves, fruits, and presents of all kinds, a number of lamps being also mixed

Studies will see how the Werter-fever continues its ravages; how, even at the present day, young men, who are born to exercise a mighty influence upon their age, withdraw from the world out of an affected æsthetical disgust and ridiculous affectation, which is unpardonable in young men, and which can be excused only in old wounded veterans or simpering old maids. It is easy to understand how all these fops are the greatest admirers, nay even, as it were, the body-guard of Goethe. This name has more weight with them than that of God, Fatherland, or anything else; and this because he, by flattering their vanity and weakness, opened up to them that old and well-known poetical asylum, within which they might dwell unharassed by the stern calls of duty.

The wretched Siegwart attracted, next to Werter, the greatest attention about the year 1775. This work is far more innocent than Werter, but its weakness leaves an unpleasant impression upon a manly mind; the more unpleasant, as it was the symptom of an anxiety, pain, and resignation diffused through the age,—a resignation which but too plainly marks the degraded popular spirit of that age. Siegwart might love, and must live, in a cloister. Modern worldliness ensnares him, so that he cannot seize upon it vividly, freely, and boldly; the old church holds him fast, yet it tells him nothing of that poetry which formerly

among them. The children are then called in, and each receives from the person who has erected the tree the present destined for him. This tree is called *krippel*.

dwelt within its holy walls. The lives of Bronner and Schad, who had fled from a monastery, and the whole literature of the illuminati, proves that the poorer, yet educated, catholic youth of that age, really occupied this mournful position half-way between *ought* and *may not, will* and *can not.* Strong minds took refuge in the frivolity of a Blumauer; weak ones in the sentimentality of a Siegwart, in whom they sought consolation for their tears. But the whole affair is diseased; and the only thing connected with it, which can afford satisfaction, is the assurance that it can be only temporary.

Those sufferers, Renouncers, stood only on the limits,—at the side. The wide stage of life, as well as of the novel, was impregnated with family sentimentalism, which, though occupied with Philistinism, endeavoured to ennoble it by giving it more refined feelings, and a style of a more polished character. In this work the leading part was performed by La Fontaine[9]. His numerous novels occupy that period which stood half-way between the bag-wigs and queues on the one hand, and the new French Titus-wigs[1] and the Grecian draperies on the other. This may be seen from the illustrations to his works. But the gentle La Fontaine never thought of adopting the

[9] August Heinrich La Fontaine, born at Braunschweig, Oct. 10th, 1759; died at Halle, April 20th, 1831: novels,—The Two Brides; Sonderling; Family Stories; dramas,—The Way of the World; (about sixty volumes).

[1] A fashion borrowed from the Romans, which became very common in Germany about the beginning of the century.

frivolity of the French consulate along with its nudities and curled wigs. He was acquainted with France and the Revolution only out of books, so that he returned to Rousseau, from whom he took only the good; like the bee, which sucked honey from the flower, in which, however, it left the poison. In this way La Fontaine repeated, in the most innocent manner possible, the French Revolution in German families, using for this purpose only tender tears instead of blood. The young revolutionizing race cut away their queues, led the enamoured curates' daughters to the bower, and then persuaded them to lay aside their hoop-petticoats, poke-bonnets, and frizzing; and then the sweet notes of the nightingale announced that nature had triumphed over the old-fashioned power of habit. The strict mamma aids in this; she has the whole power of a by-gone age in her little fist, which she angrily places akimbo. The good papa would willingly help the volatile children, but he is too weak; he is himself afraid of their mamma; he therefore lets her take her own way. First we have tears; then faintings; abduction; at last, return and forgiveness. The papa himself cuts away his queue; the old mamma laughingly praises the new cap which her stepson has brought her. Of this kind are all the novels of La Fontaine; and what are they but true pictures of the French Revolution? The papa—Louis XVI. The mamma—the aristocracy. The nightingale—Rousseau and philosophy. The eclat, the tears, and fainting—the reign of terror. The abduction—Napoleon's oreign wars. The

reconciliation—the new constitution. Is it not foolish, and does it not bear witness to the good nature of the Germans, that the greatest revolution of modern times could be likened by us to the form of a petty family revolution? This was certainly the triumph of sentimentality.

The overthrow of the old starched Philistinism could be looked upon only in a comic light; it was in doing so that Kotzebue's talent for frivolity was most apparent. Seduction in the name of innocence—the fallen, who are pure as angels —the virtuous youths, who are so completely composed of soul, that they do not seem to know what their body does—the sentimental pastoral scenes, in which they do nothing but sigh and weep, and where tears are very plentiful,—all this is really rather unnatural. But this very flirtation with innocence rendered a little fault more piquant; effeminate tears heightened the pleasure, and gave a decent pretext for them; therefore they became great favourites. Men swallowed everything La Fontaine said; young people and ladies extolled him to the skies.

Kotzebue, too, did not fail to represent his *Hetairae* as vestals and virgins of the sun,—his *Gurlis* as children of nature and innocence; and in doing so he was very successful, for nothing gained him a greater reputation. The Easter Egg, by Soden[2], is one of the most original works

[2] Friedrich Julius Heinrich, Graf von Soden, born at Anspach, 1754; died at Nurnberg, 1831: plays (various); Political Economy; Spirit of the Penal Laws.

of this kind. A child of nature brought up amidst the Alps, a young Swiss maiden, is carrying her eggs to the market. A Cossack officer meets her. The eggs are broken. The good child weeps only at their loss, so that her father himself says: "Child, thy maiden honour thou hast, it is true, lost; but thou art still innocent."

She is delivered of a fine healthy little cossack, which the high-born bride of that officer conceals in an artificial egg, which, in accordance with the custom of the country, she presents to her faithless bridegroom at Easter. Surprise—emotion—tears. He marries the Swiss girl; the magnanimous bride marries another. One such story is sufficient to characterize the whole species.

The great majority, however, of the domestic novels did not offend decorum or morality; they merely combined sentimentalism with a pious enthusiasm for virtue; with a love of making sacrifices for virtue. This called forth a new species of novels, the novels of renunciation, which were generally written by ladies. A noble maiden is in love, but she sacrifices her own inclinations to a higher duty of honour, and voluntarily renounces her lover. Or she loves, is betrayed, and avenges herself by the noblest magnanimity. This is really the whole subject of the numerous novels of this kind. I place those of Fanny Tarnow[3] above all the others, because in them

[3] Fanny Tarnow, born in Mecklenburg Schwerin, Dec. 17th, 1771; alive: novels,—Natalie; Thekla; Kleopatra. Busy at present translating George Sand (Madame Dudenant).

virtue appears least assuming, and tenderness least concealed by prudery. In all her works she describes a maiden of a disposition naturally feeling and tenderly inclined, who, by the way in which she bears up against misfortune, proves that she is worthy of a better fate, and makes us love her as if she were our daughter. The great majority of these ladies'-novels are worse than hers, and better than those of Frau Therese Huber[4]. This last mentioned lady marks the extreme of the sentimental prudery, when she says that the female sex is much too tender and delicate not to crash like glass when exposed to the mere touch of man; that woman's highest aim is to be an angel in pure self-enjoyment, and not to lower herself to a level with the beast, by loving and marrying a man. Her 'Unmarried' are really female Werters,—fair saints, who are too good for the world; court fools; Amazons of sentimentality. I look upon them, therefore, as unnatural monsters, because they are the creation of a woman who has survived two husbands; and because no maiden has yet written a novel of the same kind,—has yet, in a similar way, praised a single life.

The celebrated Neuberin burned Punsh; yet she but burned him, a death in which there was some honour. But our celebrated prudes—the vestals of Parnassus, drown Cupid; they drown him in their novels,—a very pitiful death. The

[4] Therese Huber (daughter of Heyne), born at Göttingen, May 7th, 1764; died June 15th, 1829; (married first to Georg Forster): tales and novels.

Bacchanals did not rush more madly upon Orpheus, than our celebrated prudish authoresses did upon the poor little god of love, who is lost past rescue, for he was, as he was wont, bending his bow to avenge himself on his beautiful enemies, but, on looking round him, the son of Venus was so terrified at their ugliness, that bow and arrows fell from his astonished hand.

It is all very well for ladies who govern their husbands with one hand, to seize the pen with the other, and vent their anger against men. A man always takes pleasure in looking at a Xantippe, provided he himself be not the Socrates. But it is a pity that the ladies are too much cramped by the public. In place of giving men boxes on the ear, they only give them good advices. Thus aunts, mothers-in-law, &c., become oracles; nay, even maidens become the tyrants of marriage. In the Letters of an unknown Julia, which have survived three editions, and have become great favourites with the public, a girl has such a control over her tender lover, that she compels him to marry another, so that she herself may, in a state of single blessedness, train the new pair to become a model-couple by means of continual advices and directions. Can anything be more foolish? But sentimentality makes everything possible. The slighted lover is moved; the gosling of a bride is moved; and in emotion the lover innocently allows himself to be united with the unloved by her who does not love.

The mental superiority of females has been acknowledged by Dewette, who, in his novel of

Heinrich Melchthal, makes a young man be educated by ladies,—nay, even by North German ladies in æsthetical tea-parties [5]; as if the highest, the most dignified culture of a man could be found only there. It treats not only of a social culture, of rules of decorum, which, it must be acknowledged, are best learnt in the society of ladies, but also of the training of the mind and character, which Dewette here imparts to the young man through the instrumentality of a sentimental lady; as if, under all the circumstances, a boy's school-labour and emulation were not the best for that purpose; as if man, to use a phrase of Plato, could learn anything from woman but what is womanish.

This modern Amazonism, which opposes to men the mental power of the women as much as the ancient Amazonism did the corporeal, is one of the caricatures of the age, and deserves as much as that of ancient times to be ridiculed by an Aristophanes, whose Lysistrata, and Government of Women, contain more sound sense than the whole of our modern ladies' literature.

It was to be expected that this Amazon-like literature would arise, since sentimental literature is the opposite of everything manly. The egotism of Werter is womanish, the weak devotion of Siegwart is womanish, the family emotion of La Fontaine is womanish. This whole literature is deficient in manliness. What wonder, then, that the women should, when they become poetesses, take the command in an official capacity?

Poetical servilism is closely connected with this poetical womanishness. Is it not very characteristic, that the French should call the world of courts and drawing-rooms the 'fair world', while we Germans call it the 'great world'? The French bring their good taste into society with them; they wish to take delight in it as in something beautiful. We, on the contrary, bring our subordination, our devotion, and our love of titles, and have no wish but to look up to or down upon titled greatness. The most beautiful princess is not looked upon by the Germans as a beauty, she is merely noble; and she herself, when looking in the mirror, very probably thinks less of her divine countenance than of her high aristocratic nose. Yet, after all, nothing is more natural than that optical illusion, by means of which our authoresses see the great world in that world which is commonly so little. Some of these authoresses really live and move in this world, and it is their all; others have lived in it, and are constantly recalling the days of their youth; others again, and this class is the most numerous, would like to live in it, and are constantly forcing themselves into it. This is the reason that, among thirty of these novels written by ladies, if the scene of one be laid in the lower ranks, that of nine-and-twenty is laid among the higher classes. All their heroines are princesses, countesses, baronesses, ladies, maids of honour; the heroes are princes, counts, barons, and herrs von. The scene is laid at court, or at the family seat, the country estate. The life of the charac-

ters is made up of balls and preparing for them. If, however, this slothful life is disturbed by any event of tragic earnest, it is caused by a *mesalliance*, the principal event in every novel of this kind, and which is, at the same time, the mother of renunciation,—or by an adultery. When, however, these injuries are healed, there is nothing more to disturb the perfect happiness of the great world, this heaven upon earth, and the apostles of this heaven give themselves entirely up to the rapture of describing all its glories; the ball-dresses, the ladies' bonnets, ornaments, uniforms, gloves, stars, compliments, refreshments, dances, declarations of love, court-scandal, carping, etiquette, frivolity and prudery, insipidity and court-learning, &c.

But the affair must also be viewed seriously. In so far as the great majority of our novels are sentimental, the opinions and examples therein contained must necessarily exercise an injurious influence on the boundless circle of readers, with whom it is often the only reading. In these novels we see the most pitiful weak-heartedness, and vanity, praised as the most exalted virtue. We see how, in the simplest cases, where duty and conscience have to decide, the novel glosses over the difficulties, and palliates the weakness which goes aside from the path of duty. We see how often sound sense is scorned, and how the heroes of romance despond, whine, despair, and yet do the most improper actions. Whole works are often founded upon such expressions of ridiculous weakness. If the hero or heroine would but re-

flect for a moment, and act like a rational being, there would be no use for all that whimpering which fills the novels. Such novels must operate to the injury of less educated readers. They seduce the weak to yield themselves a prey to their weakness, because it is represented as noble; and they can lead even the strong astray. I have known instances in which strong and straight-forward men have made themselves ridiculous, by looking upon it as becoming to play the part of refined and tender souls.

Further, I am thoroughly convinced that the sentimental literature is the chief cause of that vulgarity which is directly opposed to it, and which is now so common in life and literature. The hypocrisy of idealism led to the coarsest materialism; sentimental pampering, to horror; prudery, which, out of over-refined modesty, considered the body as non-existent, to shameless obscenity; for one extreme always calls forth its opposite.

The whole system of modern etiquette is, it is true, pervaded by a sentimental lie. All the ceremonies of our society are based upon this. We can scarcely meet a friend in the street without telling a lie. We do the most indifferent things as if we did them with the most heartfelt cordiality; good-breeding gives to contempt the garment of reverence, to hatred that of love. But their forms are become so indifferent to us from long habit, that we never bestow a thought upon them. It is quite another thing, however, with the sophistry of the heart, which, in romances

and plays, passes off sickness as health; a want of nature, as a natural beauty; vice, as virtue; thus palliating every weakness and every sentimental pleasure.

It was by means of this contradiction that a phenomenon became possible which was unknown to former ages, viz., that sentimentalism which, conscious of its own vagaries, mocks itself, yet cannot give up the sweet habit of dissolving in tears, and which oscillates in a wonderful manner between smiles and tears, pleasure and pain, reverence and wrath.

Shakspere's Hamlet and Sterne's Sentimental Journey afford us, it is true, some resemblance to this; but this earlier English humour is not exactly that of a Hippel or Jean Paul, though even it is a modern phenomenon unknown to the middle ages or the ancients. Humour, in general, expresses the distinct consciousness and the deep feeling of a contradiction in the age, of a hated or unsatisfying present from which we cannot escape, of a longed-for ideal which we cannot attain,—in short, of a method of thinking, and of a condition of the mind, which originated after the Reformation; for in earlier times men knew better how to accommodate themselves to the actual state of the world, so that they remained faithful, body and soul, to their nationality, their rank, and their faith; or they passed over altogether into a new condition, without being half driven away, and remaining half clinging to their old one, as is the case with many in the present day. Man was always ready to go wherever his birth or his fate

constrained him; for he was modest and powerful. He never strove to accomplish what was impossible, and he could accommodate himself to his destiny. Now, however, men will not be content with anything, and yet are unable to throw off the trammels of the pettiest habit. He who comprehends this unpleasant twofold state is a humorist.

That humour, however, which has been directly connected by Jean Paul and Hippel with the sentimental literature, is only one species of humour; it is by no means the only form in which German humour may manifest itself, however often men have attempted to imitate them. I look upon this form as inseparable from the sentimental period, in the same way as the humorous comedies of Tieck and Arnim are inseparable from the romantic, and Börne's humour from the political period.

Hippel was the first who, in his Life in Prominent Lines, and in his Knights from A to Z, introduced among us laughing emotion, weeping mockery. He lived in Prussia, on the Baltic, near Hermes; and, during the period of the first enthusiasm felt for English literature. It is easy to see that Goldsmith and Sterne exercised a mighty influence over him; but he borrowed only the courage of expressing his feelings, not the feelings themselves, for they bear indisputable marks of his German nationality. He was the first who translated lyric poetry into prose; and who, in his pictures of still life, of lonely misfortune, of sacrifices unknown to fame yet hard to bear, sunk even to the deep sorrow of Hölty;

whilst, on the other hand, he could, like Rabener, Thümmel, and Lichtenberg, scourge with the most bitter sarcasm the prejudices, affectations, and fashions of the age. The noblest humanity, the rarest gift of exciting emotion, and an excellent style, have, at length, secured to this author, who was formerly too little valued, the high rank in German literature, which he so well deserves.

Jean Paul[6], who is such a general favourite with the Germans, and who is, next to Goethe, the best painter of modern life, was near akin in genius to Hippel, though he possessed talents of a higher order. Goethe and Jean Paul are the real Dioscuri of modern times. Both paint the life in which they lived; but as viewed from two different points. Goethe fawned upon, approved of, and praised this life, describing it in its unity as a whole; Jean Paul, on the contrary, looked at it with a humorous eye, half in melancholy, half in mockery, describing it in its parts, in the endless contradictions which pervade it, and which distinguish our age so much from the self-secure and satisfied middle ages. Yet both poets agree in some things: in being so manysided, in giving such prominence to their personal feelings, and in taking pleasure in making themselves the objects of their representations. Goethe was manysided because it is talent; he took pleasure in describing

[6] Johann Paul Friedrich Richter (Jean Paul), born March 21st, 1763; died at Bayreuth, November 14th, 1828 : novels (if they may be called so)—Hesperus ; Titan ; Quintus Fixlein ; Invisible Lodge; Levana; Greenland Papers; Kleine Bücherschau ; Vorschule der Aesthetik.

himself in his lovers and heroes, because all virtuosi take pleasure in looking into a mirror. Jean Paul was manysided, because the humorous views of the world interpenetrate everything; and he took pleasure in describing himself, because in the knowledge of self lies the key to all knowledge of man, and because he, as a genuine humorist, saw in the tragi-comical double nature of the external world only that of his own mind.

This double nature is the characterizing mark of Jean Paul. Its first characteristic is sensibility, —the suffering feeling, which, again doubled, partly rises to tragic woe and sublime lamentation, partly soothes itself with idyllic sentimentality and childlike emotion. In this we see expressed a true musical rise and fall of feeling. In Jean Paul we sometimes perceive lamentation and deep sorrow at the weakness of human nature, at the wretchedness of man, and his unnatural vices, and especially at the corrupted state of our social relations; and he describes every kind of modern sorrow and of modern vice in the truest and most vivid colours, and with the deepest feeling. Sometimes his boiling sorrow passes away into soft melancholy; and then he rescues his offended feelings of tenderness, and carries them away into the world of innocence, which always builds its little idyllic garden close to the savage highway of life. He paints innocent minds, children, pure men, the quiet and still life of the country. Yet these pictures are always pervaded by a trait of melancholy, or, in another style, of jesting irony.

The second characteristic of this double nature is mockery. The more manly nature, raising itself above the world and its own sorrows, boldly attacks, with the weapons of wit, these same faults and vices, which caused such melancholy feelings in the poet. In this mockery we also perceive a rising and falling motion. The poet sometimes rises to the most biting sarcasm, to a satire which burns to the very bone; sometimes he merely sports with cheerful irony. Sarcasm is commonly combined with his tragic sorrow; irony with his idyllic sentimentality.

Both moments pervade to such an extent almost all the works of Jean Paul, that he often intermingles in the same page the most mournful with the most ridiculous descriptions. Some have reproached him with this, without reflecting, however, that it is precisely in this that the truth of the humour and its greatest effect consists. If we take away the double nature of his humour, its existence ceases. In humour the two contrasts are so thoroughly interpenetrated, that language is never able to express in sufficiently accurate terms this intimate union, or the rapid interchange of feelings.

Jean Paul has been reproached, and with greater justice, with making his descriptions, where they ought to be objective, not objective enough, that is, in the truth and conduct of his characters. It cannot be denied, that many of his heroes and heroines, especially those who are serious and affecting, or his mere ideals, and again, especially in Titan, are neither true nor

consistent with nature, are too evidently mere poetical creations, and do not resemble real beings. Yet even here an excuse may be found for the poet. It was no part of his plan, neither did it consist with the nature of his poetry, to attend to the unities. Where they do occur in his works, they look like external frames meant to bear the luxuriance of his sentiments and his wit. These are the principal things. Humour always proceeds by analysis, decompounding the given unity of life, as well as of character. He enters with feeling the deepest folds of the most refined parts. It is only when we give up to him the external guidance that he can enter into a psychological detail; and if he had really given a greater polish to his characters, and had attempted to introduce a greater degree of symmetry and proportion into his works, he would have been obliged to lop away the best parts of his rich and beautiful details, of his digressions and episodes. We must also remember that subjective views pervade humour; so that it would be onesided to desire, in addition to the beauties which it offers, others which are opposed to it, and which are to be found in other poets. We may grant everything that has been said about the errors in his too-numerous and learned metaphors, without being very much offended with them. We would willingly pardon every one his mannerism, if he were but a Jean Paul; and a fault of richness is always better than one of poverty.

The best quality of Jean Paul, and that which places him on a level with the noblest of the na-

tion, is the nobleness of his disposition, his pure virtue, and the fire of noble passion,—that moral anger at vice, those exalted qualities of character, which he shared with Schiller. Jean Paul resembles Schiller in always contrasting innocence with vice, justice with injustice. There is scarcely a crime of the age which his eagle eye does not lay bare, which his amiable feelings have not warned us from, or which his talented persiflage has not sharply scourged. And there is nothing innocent or beautiful, there is no virtue of the age, which Jean Paul has not acknowledged and set up as a model in affecting pictures. He found out the light and the dark side of every object; and there are few of his contemporaries who have so acutely examined and so correctly ennobled their age.

Many think that this amiable poet is too weak and womanish, and are offended at his excessive proneness to emotion. It is true that his weak heart sometimes raves, that his sensibility often suffers by an excessive and diseased irritability; but he gives himself up to this sweet melancholy only when he feels for himself, and it give ways to a proper manly exaltation when he feels himself called upon to instruct or to punish. Naturally of a weak disposition, he becomes strong and manly when he is inspired with any pious or moral idea; then he is never deficient in the passion of virtue, in the noble glow of wrath, and that love of truth which is careless of all consequences. His inborn softness, however, begets in him a toleration which is very rare in our age,—that

toleration, namely, which, without being indifferent, casts out of sight all party feelings, and acknowledges the good wherever it is to be found. In this toleration Jean Paul is most like the great Herder. Jean Paul, notwithstanding his rich and boundless wit, never abuses this dangerous weapon; his conscientiousness, therefore, cannot be too much praised. He is the most peaceful, the most loyal of our poets; yet he is at the same time the one who possessed, incomparably, the richest arsenal of wit and dialectics for controversy. We must say of him, who possessed every quality to be in this age the true *advocatus diaboli*, that he was the gentlest and most innocent of all our poets. No one could have been such a devil, yet none was such a pious childlike angel as he.

Yet it was evident, too, that his imagination was constantly electrified by love alone, by the overflowing of an enthusiastic mind. Everything was gay around him, because he looked upon everything with eyes of love, as the bridegroom does upon his bride. Even age itself did not damp the glow of his ever-burning flame. His soul was a prison, which always, whether amidst mist, or stationed on the sunlit heights of life, created around it rainbows of varied hue, always equally variegated, vivid, blooming, and brilliant. The butterfly-wings of his imagination have impressed their varied glow even upon the smallest card or the most trifling object. In his eyes everything became a poetical image or a witty antithesis. Whatever touched him drew from him the divine electric spark of genius.

Almost every work of Jean Paul is characterized by a true German feature, good nature (Gutmüthigkeit), combined with a high and rich degree of culture; but it is of no use in the thousand embarrassments of every-day life. Goethe's heroes are always sentimental Don Juans, who train ladies of high feelings just as they would do horses, and who are acquainted with all the arts of selfishness. In Jean Paul's works we meet his contrast, an innocent, timorous youth, full of soul, which, however, like a sensitive plant, shrinks into itself at every touch; full of spirit, which he either cannot apply or always does so at the wrong place. In the former, we see the youthful Frankfurt patrician; in the latter true German contentedness.

There is something very affecting in the true-hearted youths of Jean Paul, who so often make themselves ridiculous. There is, however, a great deal of truth in the character. They have, or at least had, many prototypes in reality. This modesty was peculiar to a great portion of our youth in consequence of their pious and moral education, and of their modest poverty; nay, it may still be often found. War ceased: no sounding trumpet, no joyful pleasure summoned the young men to take a part in public life. Nurtured in the confined family circle, devoted to lonely studies, repressed by the caprice of power, by the preponderance of favour over merit, and by the customs of the aristocracy, naturally good-humoured, and looking upon custom as a divine law; there was really a great number of educated,

deep-thinking youths, who were precisely what Jean Paul represented them, and who, at least, prove that the primitive noble German nature could maintain its ground in spite of political demoralization, effeminacy, and systematical enervation. Innocence, modesty, a proper feeling for what is great and beautiful, a deep abhorrence of what is vulgar, will be always born anew,—is, as it were, innate; and though these good qualities of the young should, in the end, change into the evil ones of old age; though they should in the end, be absorbed by the supremacy of vulgarity, and become all-powerful; still it required a great impulse from without, suddenly to change the tender feeling for modesty and honour, which had long appeared only womanish, shy, or even timorous, in Jean Paul's youths, into a manly zeal and warlike wrath.

Before we leave Jean Paul, we must mention an author who has succeeded best in imitating his style, yet who is little known, because he wrote principally for the medical public, and studiously persisted in concealing his name. Mises[7], the medical humorist, sometimes reminds us vividly of the sarcasms of Katzenberg[8], sometimes of the sweet and weak voice of the Margrave, in Jean Paul. He, too, is one of the most

[7] Der Mises, (real name Gustaf Theodore Fechner,) born at Muskau, April 19th, 1801; alive; professor of medicine in Leipzig: Repertory of New Discoveries; On Galvanism; On Organic Chemistry; Book of Life after Death; edited Haus-Lexicon.

[8] A character in one of Jean Paul's novels.

talented, as well as most amiable writers we possess. In 1822 he commenced his Panegyric of the medicine and natural history of the day, a work which is full of the most biting satires upon the courtly ignorance of the physicians. He next published his Stapelia Mixta, and the Comparative Anatomy of an Angel, works full of the most original thoughts; and, lastly, two medical satires, —an Apology for the Cholera against the Physicians, and a Proof that the Moon is composed of Iodine. It is remarkable that writings like these are less read than others which are trivial. As Mises is so little known, I hereby recommend him to all who are fond of clever writing.

Saphir[9] who likewise imitated Jean Paul, is far better known. His imagination is very rich; his good humour inexhaustible. No one can surpass him in making puns. He should never have left Wien; he should never have mixed himself up with the theatrical controversies of Berlin and München. This forced him to expose his weak side and to commit blunders, which, added to the hatred of those whom he had offended by his wit, a contempt which he did not merit. Yet I have always excused his conduct on account of his position, and I do so here again. Good humour is so rare in our age, that it should be valued and spared. But it has such a knack of uniting everything against it, to perplex and unnerve it, and it is commonly linked by nature with such *bonhomie* and levity, that it cannot

[9] M. G. Saphir; alive: Wild Roses.

stand its hard trials. Saphir is in many respects a martyr for humour. In an age less excited by passions, and in a residence more secure, such as that formerly possessed by Father Abraham a Santa Clara, he would, instead of making every one his enemy, have found only friends. If we cast away from his numerous writings, (which are almost all articles in journals,) the trivial, the controversial, and the temporary, there will remain a germ of precious wit; a book, which even posterity will read with mirth and laughter.

Oetinger, who wasted his natural talents amidst the vulgarity of theatrical criticism, also devoted himself to this kind of local and temporary wit. Brennglas has lately made a very humorous book, by collecting the popular wit of Berlin.

Lax[1], Zweibein, and Nork, have all attempted to imitate Jean Paul's humour, but without any great success.

FRIVOLITY.

We shall first speak of the frivolity of modern times; we shall again return to the romantic frivolity. Frivolity necessarily appeared in literature as soon as men began to look upon the cheerful side of Philistinism, as was done by every genteel or rich lounger, by every spendthrift and freethinker; nay, it was even, to a certain extent, called forth by the tastelessness

[1] Louis Lax, born at Dessau, November 1st, 1805; alive: editor of the Auchen, (Aix-la-Chapelle), Political Gazette: novels, á la Jean Paul—Chevalier Reynaud; The Travel-cure; The Avenger; Van der Werf.

of the Philistines. Sentimentalism also contributed, to a certain extent, to this. Pedantry and hypocrisy have charms for the petulant.

Frivolity seemed at first to be merely an innocent yet moral jest at the disgraceful and silly follies of the age, and it at first aimed, not at the sacred itself, but only against its abuse and desecration. Of this nature was the frivolity of Wieland, Thümmel, the Nicolaitans, the Illuminati. Of the same kind, too, were the many excellent scourgings given by Kotzebue to the Philistines,—a work for which he deserves to be praised.

When the frivolous literature began to be polite, it assumed a more dangerous character, for it then represented a refined morality as the privilege of the higher ranks; nay, even as a grace peculiarly their own. In so doing they were preceded by the French, as well as by Goethe.

Frivolity became even more dangerous when it learned to hide itself under the mask of sentimentalism, peeping out only like the horse's hoof from under the garb of the hermit. Goethe, whose Faust, for example, raves about heaven, and the stars, and eternity, while he is labouring with all his might to seduce Gretchen, was distinguished for the first of these styles. In the last, Kotzebue seeks his master, with whom amiable innocence always becomes enciente, it knows not how.

As frivolity, however, from its very nature, tolerates neither restraint nor, in the end, even defence, it must, after having made trial of its various hypocrisies, become revolutionary and

rage in total and shameless nakedness. It must strive to free itself from the fetters of the present, and seek something new, as was done by Heinse and Friedrich Schlegel, who, therefore passed over into romanticism; or, incapable of feeling an enthusiasm for anything which is not there, and too practical to deceive itself, too shameless to go away, it must expose to view, even in the midst of good society, the nakedness of grace, combined with the immorality learned from France while the consuls were in power.

The wit of Haug[1] was of a very innocent character. This new German Martial, the only professional epigrammatist, was one of the softest and gentlest authors. The wittiest work that he has written was that which consisted of hyperboles on Wahl's great nose: his impromptus are not nearly all printed.

His countryman Weisser did not understand how to concentrate his wit in such a pleasant manner, or to administer it in such minute quantities, as Haug. He added too much prose to it. A third countryman, Schlotterbeck[2], attained, by his unassuming and cheerful humour, great fame in the department of occasional poems.

Weber[3], the author of Letters of a German

[1] Johann Christoph Haug, born March 19th, 1761; died at Stuttgart, January 30th, 1829: poems and epigrams.

[2] Johann Friedrich Schlotterbeck, born at Wurtemburg, June 7th, 1765; died 18—: fables and tales; poems.

[3] Karl Julius Weber, born at Langenburg, 1767; died at Kupferzel, July 19th, 1832: Letters of a German travelling in Germany; On Monachism; History of Chivalry; Democritus, or Posthumous Papers of a Laughing Philosopher.

Travelling in Germany, of Monachism, &c., is a remarkable, and, in his way, a very amiable phenomenon of his age. He possesses, in the highest degree, the cheerful pleasant qualities of a hale, old, sexagenarian, who, being an old bachelor, has not much to trouble himself about, and who is willingly, nay cheerfully, pardoned some little license on account of the cheerfulness with which he enters society, and for the zeal with which he enters into conversation. His celebrated work on Germany is, in fact, a very amusing companion and guide, one to which we are often indebted for an acquaintance with some of the most characteristic traits of our native land. The pleasant tone which pervades the whole work must tend to cheerfulize every reader: nay, it is the true humour of travelling. Who would listen to a cynic narrating his travels? We do not, therefore, blame the author for making Bacchus and Venus the gods of his journey, and for never failing to direct our attention to those districts and towns where good wine and pretty faces are to be found.

A valuable quality of his work is, that he tells us not merely about real curiosities, but also about common things, which are often the most curious, precisely because they appear so different in different countries. He never forgets, when telling us about the celebrated natural beauties, gems of art, and recollections of grand historical events, to keep his eye upon the every-day life of men, and to observe their appearance and mode of living, their habits and customs, their

houses, and even their cattle. In this way, he has observed a great number of characteristic traits, which would, in all probability, have been passed over by another traveller, and which, therefore, give us a clearer idea than any other has done of localities. For instance, he introduces from almost every district local proverbs and topics, which are at the same time examples of the various dialects.

Weber is, heart and soul, a German: and how could he be otherwise, seeing that he knew our great Fatherland far too well to imitate any pedant in loving and valuing his own petty province alone! The opinions, which he seizes every opportunity of expressing, regarding the mutual toleration which the Germans ought to exercise towards one another, and regarding the feelings which ought to regulate our conduct to foreign countries, are always truly excellent. Opinions of this kind ought to be particularly recommended to those who, knowing nothing but their own dear home, and esteeming their own narrow horizon as the only land of the elect, either look down upon everything else with the ridiculous pride of the negro, or seek with envious malice to lessen the advantages of foreigners; our author therefore derives the expression *hämisch*, malicious, from *heimath*, home—saying that it originally was meant to designate all narrow-hearted pedants who sat brooding at home.

His other works are pervaded by the same cheerful, merry tone, sometimes even by a little frivolity, while there is always in the background

a patriotic, and even moral seriousness; for even his Monachism, though crowded with passages in the style of Voltaire, is written for the sole purpose of laying bare abuses, and of preventing men from falling back into faults of the same kind. He often speaks as an eyewitness, for he lived during the period when the empire still existed, and in petty catholic states. I am very much mistaken if his fame, and the popularity of his pleasant writings does not increase with time, for as yet he is far less valued than many other authors who are far inferior to him.

In Weber, we cannot for an instant mistake the cheerful Frenchman. The good old jokes of past times, the frivolous sympathy with life, assumed in him a manly appearance, seeing that they had to produce a combat with oppressive regulations,—wrath at provincialism. It assumed another shape in the professional jokers of the large cities of Berlin and Wien. Here its only object was to tickle the senses of the apathetic world of fashion.

Langbien[4], the favourite story-teller, is, like Kotzebue, La Fontaine, Julius von Voss, &c., a denizen of the good old Berlin age before the battle of Jena. A joke, as simple as the Berlin white-beer, innocent slips, nice little adulteries, which were merely meant as a jest, and without any evil intention, poverty and noble-mindedness, the greatest respect for money combined with a

[4] August Friederich Langbein, born at Radeberg, near Dresden, 1757; died January 2nd, 1835: poems; tales; novels.

contentedness with what heaven provides, some sentimental emotions and silly advisings always to be very amiable and good, universal philanthropy and a freemason's grasp;—such are the elements of the Berlin humour of those days! Men were then merry, perhaps even a little licentious, but at any rate they were good-natured; for, as Schiller says, "good-natured are they all." People were then, in fact, more amiable than they are now. They are no better now than they were then, they are only a little more prosy. The same inanity and levity which then appeared, as they really were, cheerful, now profess to be religious and philosophical deep-mindedness, or, in one word, the young wanton is become an old bigot.

Poetry, too, was then familiar with social life. Poets were the dear, pleasant advisers of the ladies, consenting to their every wish, without teazing them with the troublesome and foreign romanticism of a Fouqué or a Walter Scott. Thence it is said,—

> But for a season blooms the May,
> And then it soon doth pass away.
> Now ponder what I say, fair maid!
> Our winged days fly like a shade.
> Wither flowers and blooming spray,
> And beauty's roses fast decay.

Then was every poor wife, who had an evil old husband, mildly and kindly supported. Her lover came quietly into the house, went quietly out, and

then complacently blabbed the whole affair to the world. Men had not then heard of the profound truth of the holy Genoveva, who, since her story was told by Ludwig Tieck, has in such beautiful verses preached for the use and profit of all old gouty gentlemen, the example of the eye-turning, crossing, romantic sufferers, and Countesses Dolore's. Then La Fontaine depicted the white-clad curates' daughters so ambiguously, that only the nightingale singing the bridal song could tell us what the good girls themselves did not know. Then Julius von Voss wrote his sentimental Love in a Bridewell. Then Langbein wrote his favourite Tales,—

> Nature, holy, dear, and sweet,
> Let us follow on thy track."

All love, all build nests, says brother Moritz in Kotzebue,—all mistake their own beds, &c.; in the morning a general surprise takes places, and all separate well pleased. That is a specimen of how they loved and lived in the good old times. Why have we not as merry a time now? Alas, these times of innocence will probably never return!

Contentment, too, with little, rejoicing in patient moderation, which even at the full cup still calls out,—

> Charming goblet, circle round,
> Lightly pass from hand to hand;
> But leave us still our senses sound,
> Reason, too, and self-command.

Fools, with joy, that cup have quaffed,
Which ill to head and heart hath wrought;
But with us the sweetest draught,
Is with reason dearly bought.

Could men possibly be happier than when inspired with such a humour, which, ready for anything, guards itself but from passion, which is never in the least incommoded by any moral law, and only takes care not to be heated unnecessarily? Is thy wife false; laugh at it. If men set before thee their best wine; don't drink too much. Always retain thy peace of mind. If thy neighbour's rose please thee, pluck the rose; but she must laugh, thou must laugh, her papa must laugh, only take care that there is nothing tragical in the story, that there is nothing of Schiller's Infanticide, Bürger's Leonora, or Faust's Gretchen! Let there be no blood drawn; no duel, no assassination, or the like! Let everything be without passion; be peaceful; shun all vexatious congestion of the blood!

These are the rules for the conduct of the so-called good old times, for which so many old fellows, who cut off their queues some thirty years ago, still secretly sigh. We have no wish to be unjust to them. There is as much excess in our modern prudery as in their levity.

They, these old fellows, were too much of epicures; and, by being men only when contrasted with women, they forgot to be so in all other cases. If any one read the tales of Langbein, the novels of Julius von Voss, and

the tricks of the officers who were broken for flight and cowardice in the winter of 1807, he will be completely convinced that, at that time, the courage of heroes consisted principally in intriguing. Men lived in the most becoming concord; all embraced and kissed each other, like sparrows upon the house-top. But when Napoleon came he soon scattered them.

Herr Castelli[5] is one of this tribe; but he is a Viennese, and the genuine Viennese humour, which he possesses in the most perfect degree, is not so temporary as the Berlin literary frivolity; neither, however, is it so extensive. In Berlin, immorality succeeds pietism, and pietism immorality; in Wien men always remain the same. The serious and tragic muse has planted her throne in Wien, and the youngest poets rival us in horrible tragedies, woful ballads and super-old-German romances; but these are the fashion of the educated; but the true Viennese public still listen to Castelli; they still take delight in his wit.

All these merry brothers of the most wretched epoch of our politics and literature ridicule the old fashions; for in their eyes nothing can be more contemptible and pitiful than their own fashions as soon as these become old-fashioned.

[5] Ignaz Vincenz Franz Castelli, born at Wien, March 6th, 1787; secretary for Lower Austria: poems; plays; comedies,—The Swiss Family; Picture of Viennese Society; War Songs (which seem to have been of a very spirit-stirring nature, for, when the French were in possession of Austria, in 1814, a decree appeared in the *Moniteur*, ordering Castelli, the author of these poems, to be apprehended and punished.

This ridicule often consisted of a silly laughter at the old-fashioned costume, but it also often became a deadly contempt for ancient virtue and manliness.

Prätzel, whose tales are far more harmless than those of Langbein, was very successful as a caricaturist of provincial and old-fashioned costumes and persons.

Julius von Voss[6], who had a better notion than any other of the state of Prussia before and immediately after the battle of Jena, showed great energy in depicting the frivolous characters of his age. Several of his novels describe the dissolute life, &c., which the officers of the Prussian army then led; in fact, the historian will nowhere get so clear an idea of the causes which led to Napoleon's victory, as in the pages of this acute observer. In his Honeymoon he describes one of those disgraceful hurried marriages and divorces which were then so common in Berlin. This is a work of profound psychological truth, one, in fact, equal to the best satires of the ancients. In his Herr von Schievelbein, he describes an upstart, who, without any merit, attains the highest military and civil honours, a case which was common enough in those days. In his Artist's Pilgrimage he introduces us to babbling about the fine arts, the mania for theatres and concerts, then so prevalent in Berlin. In like manner, almost all his novels and comedies are true pictures of the manners of his age; nay, even his immoral pic-

[6] Julius von Voss: The Baron and his Tutor; comedies; The Maiden's Duel; Angelica; novels and tales.

tures, which have been painted from the populace, for example, his Love in a Bridewell, is characterized by a powerful and true finish of pencil. Such authors, who were very properly despised by their own age, are of great service to posterity; for example, Petronius. When thousands of descriptions of silly and sentimental sensations, and historical novels, &c., are forgotten, the writings of this Julius von Voss will be valued for the truth with which they depict his age, at the moment of its deepest moral and political degradation.

Emerentius Scævola[7] has also given us some pretty strong and powerful descriptions of the dissoluteness in which lust and rapine meet each other, and where adulteries, murders, and thefts are committed to our hearts' content. Yet this author is mild and tender, in comparison with Althing[8], a name under which a professor, an instructor of youth, who could, unpunished and unhanged, guide and charm them not merely to natural, but also to every kind of unnatural, immorality, and whose writings were lately printed and publicly sold by a Leipzig publisher.

A very refined and polished literature arose alongside of this coarse one. It let itself down to the level of the people, as the latter had

[7] Emerentius Scævola is a pseudonyme. He is commonly thought to be a Prussian official (the postmaster at Königsberg): The Wife and the Campaign Horse; The Veteran and his Son; The Creole Lady and the Negro.

[8] Althing von Christian Aug. Fischer, professor in Würzburg, born Aug. 29th, 1771; died, April 14th, 1829: travels in almost every country in Europe.

ascended into the higher regions of society. The Memoirs of the Freiherr von S——a, by Woltmann the historian, contain, drawn by the hand of a master, descriptions of the manners of the higher ranks, especially of the diplomatists, as frivolous as they are true. Our posterity will take an interest not only in what is clever, but also, and chiefly, in what reflects the spirit of an age. In this class must be included Graf Benzel-Sternau[9], who, though he took less pains to concentrate his spirit and wit, at first took delight in copying Kotzebue's style, though he afterwards imitated the prating of Zschokke. The acquaintance with the world, and the clever scandal which pervades all his earlier writings, proves, that he would have been a far more important author, had he kept from adopting strange styles, amongst which that of the Bavarian Letters, with its constitutional pathos, was but little in accordance with that of the Golden Calf.

The cleverest, as well as the most popular frivolity found its home on the stage. Comedy requires it; nay it cannot want it even among the noblest people and in the most moral age. I see nothing immoral in this. The comic effect necessarily takes away the seducing features of frivolous descriptions. If we laugh at vices, they are no longer dangerous. The sentimental beautifying of vice is the only thing which seduces and entraps the heart. It is, therefore, a charac-

[9] Christian Ernst Graf von Benzel-Sternau, born at Mainz, 1767; alive: The Golden Calf; Biography; Letters on Bavaria; novels.

teristic of our comic authors, that the more immoral they become, the more do they mix in sentimentality, whilst those of older times who were not sentimental, often appear moral, notwithstanding a very free, nay, often, coarse style.

The celebrated actor Schröder[1] is, next to Lessing, the best of our modern comic dramatists. He showed great taste in adapting foreign and native pieces for the stage, and even invented the plots of some himself. He had, in common with the clever Frenchman Beaumarchais, the power of truly copying and describing in a comic strain, yet without caricaturing, the frivolity of the higher ranks in his age—the cicisbeo-ship which had then become universal,—the separate bed and board which was usual in every fashionable marriage, and the whole system of French gallantry. His Ring is, in this point of view, one of the cleverest comedies that ever was written. However much it is to be pitied, that, since his time, this tone of gallantry and politeness has become prevalent on the German stage, yet it may still be asked if a better tone could have been attained. The world was in such a state; the stage had to mirror it; and man would have gained some advantages had the poets possessed but polish and grace,—the forlorn hope against the in-breaking vulgarity of thought. It was fortunate that Schröder's polished refinement became so popular on the German stage, instead of that degraded baseness

[1] Friedrich Ludwig Schröder, born Nov. 3rd, 1744; died, Sept. 3rd, 1816: plays—Amtmann Graumann; Still Waters are Deep (adaptation of Rule a Wife and Have a Wife).

which Goethe threatened to introduce in his Accomplices. It was a noble trait of the German public, that it gave no countenance to this basest of all the works of Goethe. Had it been led astray, Goethe would have published more in this same style.

Jünger[2] has also written good comedies, in which, however, he described the life of the upper rather than of the middle ranks. Who could have guessed that this cheerful poet would end in deep melancholy. Schall[3], Bauernfeld[4], Blum[5], Lebrun[6], &c., are the most distinguished among the great crowd of modern comedy-writers who have in the same easy and pleasant style, ridiculed the foibles of social life.

Far above all these must be ranked the world-renowned August von Kotzebue[7], who, by a happy

[2] Johann Friedrich Jünger, born at Leipzig in 1759; died, 1797: novels,—Fritz; The Little Cæsar, &c.; comedies (10 volumes).

[3] Karl Schall, born at Breslau, Feb. 24th, 1760; died, Aug. 11th, 1833: comedies,—The Intercepted Whist Party; A Kiss; A Box on the Ear; &c. &c.

[4] Edward von Bauernfeld: comedies—Franz Walter; Confessing; The Saloon; &c.

[5] Carl Blum; alive at Berlin; manager of the theatre royal composer—various works.

[6] Karl Lebrun, born in 1791: comedies; farces.

[7] August Fried. Ferdinand von Kotzebue, born at Weimar, May 3rd, 1761; murdered by Sand, at Mannheim, March 23rd, 1819: History of Germany; Tour in Italy; Autobiography; plays (about a hundred); Gustavus Vasa; Hugo Grotius; Virgin of the Sun; Misanthropy and Repentance; La Perouse; Indians in England. (For an account of his Life, and an outline of many of his plays, see Taylor's Sur-

union of frivolity and sentimentality, flattered his contemporaries in the most sensitive point, and thus became, notwithstanding Goethe and Schiller, the favourite of the public. He made Parnassus a bagnio, and secured for himself the post of go-between. No one so well understood how to tickle the weaknesses and evil inclinations of the educated, and to flatter the vanity of the uneducated, public. He failed only when he attempted to catch a tone of high refinement. His nature was too common-place to find out that tenderness of expression behind which vice commonly conceals itself in more delicate minds.

It is strange enough that Kotzebue did not, by means of his extraordinary talents, elevate himself to some more independent position in society. Had he but ridiculed everything; but what characterizes him as a true son of his age is, that he, like Goethe, judged freely and independently in but one direction, while in all others he gave himself up to sentimental weakness. Calculated only for caricaturing his age, for catching its comic points, Kotzebue piqued himself on being able to look upon it in a serious, earnest, and moving point of view,—in idealizing it. This, however, he did only in order to acquire friends, after he had, by his ridicule, raised up unto himself enemies. All his whining was calculated only to make him a favourite with the sentimental public of his age, and to cover the many sins of his private life with the mantle of love. This is the cause of the contradictions which occur in his writings. Whilst he, with amiable talent, paints

the German Philistines of the present day in such a manner that the truth and delicacy of pencil shown surprises us, and might move even Cato himself to laughter, on the contrary, he again exhibits the ideal of a German, whom he, bye very sentimental method in his power, would like to make something very excellent, yet who was far more of a Philistine than he whom he had the day before ridiculed. As the *Kleinstädter* (country townspeople) is his best piece of this kind, his worst, though his most celebrated, is his Misanthropy and Repentance[8]; for in it German good nature is abused by frivolity in a way which no people could tolerate in any poet. In France, Queen Marguerite and La Fontaine have both written whole collections of very amusing adultery tales. These collections are immoral, but they possess the merit of being almost all true stories, natural and amusing traits of private life; and the lover appears as a sly rascal, the wife as faithless, the husband an unobservant blockhead, or as a jealous Othello, who avenges himself terribly. This is all quite natural; in these tales nothing is slurred over. But Kotzebue describes to us, in his Misanthrope, a cuckold who is neither tragical nor comical, who neither exposed himself, like Pantaloon or Pierrot, to the merry tricks of Harlequin; nor, like Othello, used his dagger in the blindness of his fury; but who receives back into his bosom, with tears of emotion, his dear spouse, after she had eloped

[8] Called with us The Stranger.

from her young, brave, and graceful husband, as well as her children, with a dissipated officer. This man is represented as the most excellent of all men, as a perfect *beau ideal;* this pardon, granted in a case where the holiest ties,—not only the fidelity of the wife, but also the duty of the mother,—had been deserted, is marked as the highest of virtues. And yet Kotzebue aimed only at palliating that thoughtless desecration of marriage then so common and so fashionable in France; at giving a poetical justification of French heartlessness, by means of the most disgraceful abuse of German sentimentality; and of French vices, by making a false show of German virtue. This is an incredible insult to all in whose language such a disgraceful piece was written; yet the demoralization had extended so far, the author was admired and loved for this very work.

As we everywhere find the style of Lessing pervaded by feelings of manly honour, so in Kotzebue we always find a complete want of honour. How does he value the dignity of age in the Tricks of the Page; the dignity of mankind, in the Roebuck? We might easily gather from his works a complete system of inverted morality, and we may find examples for every possible case of weakness of character, or expressed baseness. The whole society to which he introduces us upon the stage, consists of noble liars, noble thieves, noble seducers, noble courtezans, noble pimps, &c. His Barth with the Iron Forehead, in which he literally wallows in filth, is not by many degrees his basest work, for in it he does not gild

over the filth, nor give out his deep degradation of heart as virtue.

The dignity of the female sex had, as a matter of course, as little power over him as that of the male. This is the reason that he is most licentious when he wishes to paint innocence. His Gurli, in the Indians in England, and his Virgin of the Sun, of whom the one will, out of pure innocence, marry any man who enters the door; and the other, out of very innocence, does not know that she has lost it, were at one time the favourite characters on the German stage. This same Kotzebue also printed how he left his wife in a helpless and dying state, and travelled to France, visiting houses of ill-repute by the way. His brazenfaced falsehoods in denying the authorship of Barth with the Iron Forehead, and of the Bulletin, are likewise part and parcel of this chapter of shamelessness. His life, written by Körte, is a very interesting contribution to the history of German morals. What he offered to the public merely proves how much he durst offer it. He was not worse than the public which could tolerate, nay even worship him. This toleration and worshipping betoken a degree of public demoralization, which would make us blush were it not that it is fortunately long past. A bloody murder put an end to his wretched existence, as well as to the charm which he had thrown over the German nation. Viewed as a crime, his murder is the same as any other. In a political point of view it excited fears, which were not easily calmed. It possessed, as Görres

at the very first said, only a moral importance. Germany would, even had this murder never been committed, have freed itself from Kotzebue; but the poetical spirit which pervades the history of the world, loves effects,—the strong speech of facts,—indelible signs and symbols inscribed upon centuries, "as the lightning writes upon rocks;"—such a sign was the terrible end of the buffoon.

We must now speak of the noble Clauren[9], who, adding to the frivolity of Kotzebue the insipidity peculiar to the Berlinese, masking, with a certain foolish grace, what showed itself boldly in Kotzebue, and even halved words, using, for example, *küss*— for *küsschen*, *wäd*— for *wädchen*. Kotzebue's Gurli, who unbecomingly falls round one's neck, is yet more tolerable than Clauren's poor, silly, potatoe-peeling lacemaker, who dreams of her sweetheart, how he, in the garb of Cupid,—big and clumsy though the fellow may be,—steers her in a little boat. The disgusting affectation with which such dreams are shamelessly related is far worse than the amiable innocence of the pregnant Virgin of the Sun. Better sounds than dumb sins: better Kotzebue than Clauren.

Anton Ball, Laun[1], Gustav Schilling[2], &c., were distinguished among the numerous crowd of

[9] H. Clauren (Karl Heun): Jest and Earnest, (tales) 50 vols.

[1] F. Laun (F. A. Schulze): novels,—Citizen of Cöln, &c.,

[2] Friedrich Gustav Schilling, born at Dresden, March 25th, 1766: Guido von Sohnsdom; Wallow's Daughter; Star and Unstar; about 100 volumes of tales and novels.

frivolous and half-frivolous novel-writers; their insipid works were in great request at the circulating libraries, and thus came into every hand.

The Berliner Müchler,[3] who first wrote amorous nonsense, next collected a mass of anecdotes, and, lastly, dished up a register of criminal trials, marks the transition from frivolity to the later style of horrors.

We see by the adultery novels which have been so much run after since the publication of the Elective Affinities of Goethe, and which have been sedulously written by some old authoresses, that this once young and presumptuous frivolity is now becoming old. In former times the novel commonly ended, now it began, with a marriage. Formerly we there found depicted the enthusiasm and excesses of the young; now it portrayed the refined sins and disgusting aberrations of those of riper years. This marks the transition from Werter to the Elective Affinities. Yet it cannot be said that this ever became the prevailing style. It took its rise in an age in which society had again become more moral in Germany.

All these appearances belong to an age now gone by. Yet frivolity passed over into a new romantic taste, assuming on it only a new outward appearance.

So long as Philistinism exists, so long as it is not banished by a noble and beautiful state of society among the people, it must show a liking to frivolity, and will always break out under new forms.

[3] J. G. Muchler, born Sept. 23rd, 1724: Moral Tales; Story of Abelard and Heloise.

What ever public morals want in beauty will be always made up by frivolity. Morality without beauty is not powerful enough to ward off the dissoluteness which threatens society.

THE STORMERS AND PRESSERS.

(*Die Stürmer und Dränger*[4]).

It was natural that some mighty minds should strive to throw off the fetters of that weak comfortableness, in which the Philistines, the Sentimentalists, and the Frivolists moved. As modern poetry had hitherto unfolded itself in three directions, there began about the same time on the other side an undecided "storm and pressure" of minds which could find no way of developing themselves. In one point, only, were all these spirits agreed, namely, in feeling ill at ease in the present, and in forming an opposition to it; whilst the Philistines, sentimentalists, and frivolists, liked it very much. In the new opposition we again distinguish the three shades of the majority. From among the Philistines arose the honest souls of Iffland and the noisy blustering patriots, who, expressing themselves boldly and honestly against the corruption of the age, arrived at last unexpectedly at romanticism, by means of recollection of ancient German freedom. This is

[4] This title is derived from the title of one of Klinger's plays, Stürm und Dräng (Storm and Pressure, or Passion), which was one of those that produced the movement in German literature which is described in the following chapter.

the way to explain Schubart's poems, Goethe's Goetz von Berlichingen, and the romances of chivalry. The sentimentalists became enthusiasts for the ideal, who no longer carried on a petty commerce with their own hearts, but were filled with an universal love, were carried away by the first pure and noble enthusiasm which accompanied the breaking out of the North American and French Revolutions; the chief of these was Schiller. Two opposite parties took their rise from among the frivolists, which, though both at war with conservatism, were yet decidedly opposed to each other; on the one hand, the Nicolaitans, that is, the Berlin enlighteners (*Aufklärer*), under the ages of Frederick the Great, and the illuminati (*Illuminaten*), that is, the South-German enlighteners, under Joseph II., who stood forth as the defenders of all the abuses, as well as of all the poetry, which, either in church, aristocracy, or corporations, had survived the middle ages; and, on the other hand, the imaginative Don Juans, who were driven by an insatiable longing for new pleasures, from life into art, from the present into the romantic future, in order to adorn life with plundered charms. Of this nature were Heinse and Friedrich Schlegel. The former wished to ameliorate the world; the latter only to enjoy it; all wished to see the world metamorphosed in accordance with an idea or fancy dwelling in them; all united in opposing, and are therefore of much importance in examining, the progress of German literature. It was this opposition that rendered romanticism predominant, though the

victory of any onesided tendency was far from being the intention of all the stormers and pressers.

The poetical patriots are directly connected with the Philistines "gaudily dressed in their night-gowns." Klopstock, even with all his pedantry, was a good patriot; and Claudius was not less so. In Iffland we find declared advocates for freedom; honest Germans fighting for their rights; cabals yielding, and the homely citizen triumphing over the powerful minister. Yet Iffland is always loyal enough to represent princes as completely irresponsible; he always makes them make good the harm their evil servants have done. Schubart, on the contrary, omitting all mention of the servants, told the princes of their responsibility in verses of such a republican nature, that we cannot wonder at his being thrown into prison. The only circumstance which excites our astonishment is that any poet should, at the middle of the second half of last century, have dared to write a *Fürstengruft* (Grave of Princes). This same Schubart alone, of all the publicists of that day, ventured to imitate the tone of a Mickiewicz in singing, in the very interesting Swabian Chronicle, of the first partition of Poland. In short, Schubart was a Timoleon in spite of his hair-powder and queue. Twenty years before the French Revolution, there burned in his German soul all its fire, all its wrath, whilst then the French never dreamed of such an event. From the walls of his prison he sang with a lion voice:

Lift up for me, thou holy Freedom,
These fetters on my faint arms clanking,
That I may rage upon the harp-strings,
And sing thy praises.

But where art thou, O holy Freedom?
Where art thou found, first-born of heaven?
I'd cry out, could my cry awake thee,
Till the stars tottered,

Till the earth beneath me trembled,
Till the great rocks, split asunder,
Shrunk before thy holy presence,
And flung their gates open.

Truly if that age had any ground for boasting of its storming and pressure, to Schubart is the honour due. The other stormers either made the matter of use to themselves, lost their courage, or were too much of Charlatans, as was the case with Basedow and Barth.

Seume[5], though almost an age younger, most resembles him. His poems and aphorisms breathe the soft sensibility as well as the anger of a patriotic heart. In him the longing for freedom was not the cause, but the consequence of ill-treatment. He had, in his youth, been compelled to enlist, and, like many thousands of "white slaves," that is, German subjects, who were then sold by their princes to the Dutch or English, had been shipped for the colonies. A Greek Homer, which he was reading, betrayed

[5] Johann Gottlieb Seume, born near Wiessenfels, Jan. 29th, 1763; died at Toplitz, June 15th, 1810: Walk to Syracuse; poems; Travels in Russia, Sweden, &c.

his scholarship. He became free, but he did not become happy; the loss of his own freedom had taught him the greatness of that incubus which oppressed the whole of Germany. In songs and lightning-thoughts he breathed forth his longings for the freedom and honour of his country; with them in his mouth, he expired, without surviving Napoleon's overthrow. In his taste he seems more allied to the classic than the romantic forms.

It is impossible to tell who first introduced into the poetical opposition the element of romanticism. Even in the first half of last century the inhabitants of Zurich had projected an edition of the Niebelunger, and of the Minnesinger; a knowledge of Shakspere, Ossian, and the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, had been diffused by means of the Anglomania. Wieland revived men's acquaintance with Ariosto; Herder[6] with the popular ballads and tales. All these circumstances were in themselves indirectly opposed to Philistinism. Graf Stolberg, who, by singing the praises of the chivalry and loves of his own ancestors, and thus promoting the interests of the Guelphs in opposition to those of the Ghibellines, and the alliance between the church and the aristocracy, in opposition to that of the emperor and the people, wrote the first romances in the hierarchico-feudal views of the middle ages, was the first who really entered upon a direct opposition. Silly as were the romances written by Stolberg, while he was actu-

[6] See his ballad of Eliza von Mannsfeld.

ated with these views, they have become of no little importance in consequence of the great exertions soon after made by catholic romanticism. At that time he took its side only in order to praise ancient manliness, in opposition to modern weakness.

Goethe had probably nothing else in view when he wrote his Goetz von Berlichingen. The power of the middle ages, "which still had calves," was contrasted with the present; and ideas of universal freedom were connected with the former. Goethe inspired the Philistines with enthusiasm; yet he took care that their loyalty should suffer no detriment, for their power was suppressed, freedom became a mere folly of the people. In addition to all this, Goethe hastened to leave that way which tended to place him among the opposition.

Bürger[7] was the leader of those who improved the romances which had been revived by Stolberg; but even he was deeply infected with the Philistine sentimentality, and even partly with the Grecomania. He was not born to form an opposition so powerful as that of Schubart, neither could he accomplish that refined development of legendary poetry which was afterwards effected by the school of Tieck and Schlegel. He is an interesting appearance on the bounds of heterogeneous parties, in the progressive development of romanticism. His forms are distinguished by their beautiful rhythm. Some of his ballads, in

[7] Gottfried August Bürger, born at Halberstadt, Jan. 1st, 1748; died, June 18th, 1794: poems, &c. &c.

particular his Lenore, are certain of immortality. By becoming a sacrifice for poetry he awakened universal sympathy. It was quite consistent with the false poetical enthusiasm of his age, to give up sound reason for a few verses. A girl offered marriage to Bürger in a poem. In raptures he imagined that the union of a poet and a poetess must be a heaven upon earth, and was deceived.

Painter Müller[8], who was inspired with sentimental enthusiasm, likewise, stood on the limit which separates Philistinism from romanticism. His Sheep-shearing is an excellent prose idyll, which describes the country life in the Palatinate far better than Gessner. In his Niobe and other poems, he has striven for the garland which Goethe, at a later period obtained by his Iphigenia. In fine, he has by his Faust, his Genoveva, &c., made an inroad upon the realm of romanticism. But just because he veered about among all tastes, because he was a painter, and, above all, because the warmth and luxuriant fulness of his mind vented itself in too many exclamations, thus preventing him from acquiring that calm mastery of form which distinguished Goethe, he must, though the early rival of the latter, be placed far behind him. Some of his single expressions and particular sentiments are often noble.

I must also make honourable mention of Klinger[9], of whose Faust, however, we need not say

[8] Friedrich Müller, born at Kreuznach, 1750; died at Rome, April 23rd, 1825: poems; Mopsus; Adam's First Awakening; idyls; dramas,—Niobe, Faust, Genoveva.

[9] Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger, born at Frankfort on

much, but who, in his Raphael de Aquinas, a novel now become very popular, showed a glowing love for liberty and the rights of men. At a later period of his life, he travelled to Petersburg, where he collected and published the experience and observations of his life, in a work entitled, Observations on various Objects of the World and of Literature,—a work which is one of the cleverest in our literature.

Ernst Wagner[1] and Meissner[2] are, in my opinion, very trivial; yet, perhaps, it was in consequence of this that they became popular.

The novels of chivalry, thieving, and ghosts, the stories and tales of adventure, of the decried Spiess[3], Kramer[4], and Veit Weber[5], were, not-

the Maine, Feb. 19th, 1753; died, Feb. 25th, 1831: Faust's Life, Deeds, and End in Hell; The Twins; Faust of the East; Eve's First-born; The Man of the World and the Poet. See Mrs. Austin's Goethe, &c. vol. ii. p. 161, &c.

[1] Ernst Wagner, born at Rossdorf, Saxe-Meiningen, Feb. 2nd, 1768; died Feb. 28th, 1812: novels—Willibald's Views of Life; Travelling Painter; Isidore; &c.

[2] August Gottlieb Meissner, born at Bautzen in Swabia, Nov. 4th, 1753; died at Fulda, Feb. 20th, 1807: plays, historical novels, sketches (fourteen collections of tales); Alcibiades; Bianca Capello.

[3] Christian Heinrich Spiess, born at Freyberg, Saxony, 1755; died at Betdiekan, Aug. 17th, 1799: dramas,—Klara von Hoheneichen, &c.; novels,—The Twelve Sleeping Maidens; Peter Mannchen, &c.

[4] K. G. Kramer (or Cramer), born March 3rd, 1758; died, June 7th, 1817: Thirty Acres; Karl Saalfeld; Erasmus Schleicher; (about 90 vols.).

[5] Veit Weber (Georg Wächter), born 1763; died, Feb. 11th, 1837; Tales of Yore; The Femgerichte in Austria; Wilhelm Tell.

withstanding their many vulgarities, distinguished for many original and true German strong expressions, nay often by the power of invention. The great circulation which they obtained proved a natural antidote to sentimentalism. They adopted the ideas and language of Goethe's Goetz, and all their descriptions are marked by a wild natural power, which is sometimes tragical, sometimes comical, and which opposed the tame customs and narrowing prejudices of the age. Sometimes there are knights, who, like Goetz, avenge themselves on the princes and priests; sometimes robbers who punish monopolists, evil judges, &c.; at one time wandering genii who pass like a meteor through the customs of everyday life. In order to render these adventures still more interesting, they summoned to their aid the whole magic of romanticism; they called in ghosts, devils, and witches, thus paving the way in a coarse but triumphant manner for the victory of romanticism.

Babo and Graf Thorring-Seefeld adhered even more closely to Goethe's Goetz; and the Otto von Wittelsbach of the former, and the Agnes Bernauerin and Kaspar the Thorringian of the latter, are a complete imitation of Goetz,—strong demonstrations in ancient prose against tyranny, which, however, were not so affected in these poets as in Goethe. To this class we may join Leisewitz[6], whose Julius von Tarent excelled all these works in tragic value.

[6] Johann Ant. Leisewitz, born at Hanover, May 1st, 1752; died Sept. 10th, 1806 : Julius of Tarentum.

Though Schiller[7] is far superior to all these poets, yet I can find no more fitting place to speak of him. His immortal work originated in the same storm and pressure, in the same first romantic coarseness, which we see and acknowledge to be deep and true feeling in Schubart, and affectation in Goethe. His first pieces on robbers and revolutions, seemed in form and language to do homage to the favourite style, until it was remarked that a far greater mind had here opened up a new way for itself. In fact, Schiller bears the same relation to these manufacturers of chivalry, robber and ghost-stories, that Karl Moor does to his comrades,—long their equal, yet all the time far their superior.

Schiller was completely carried away into this mixed society, both because power was earlier developed in him than the grace which swayed it, and because he who had been trained up under a petty military discipline, which prescribed every motion, found, of course, pleasure in the opposite extreme—an unbridled life. Yet his very appearance betokened that higher mission yet unknown to himself.

His first feeling was, that, whilst the modern poetry had been always brought back from the

[7] Johann Christoph Friedrich Schiller, born at Marbach in Wurtemberg, Nov. 10th, 1759; died at Weimar, May 9th, 1805: The Robbers; Fiesco; Cabal and Love; Carlos; Wallenstein; Maid of Orleans; Wilhelm Tell; History of the Thirty Years' War; Revolt of the Netherlands. (I may refer unconditionally to Mr. Carlyle's Life of the Poet.)

false ideals of the Gallomania to simple nature, it would, on the contrary, be the task of the romantic poetry to return from false nature to pure ideals. The great majority of the stormers and pressers, as well as of the succeeding romanticists, had been contented with opposing to the modernizing spirit, the images of other ages and customs, often even only other costumes, or fantastic dreams, in which all sorts of vanities played to their hearts' content. But Schiller, taking a deeper view of the matter, wished not that one age should be opposed to another, but that the eternal ideal should be opposed to temporal commonplaceness, that, therefore, men should not remain obstinately attached to costumes and external affairs, but should represent mankind in their characteristic features. All one whether it be classic, romantic, or modern,—the human is the same in all ages. It ennobles or disgraces every age; and poets according as they seize upon it, contribute to the elevation or degradation of men. Schiller therefore believed that it was the highest problem of the poet to conceive the human in the noblest ideality, as Grecian art had when in its glory done, though only in the representation of the bodily; that is, had represented the godlike formation of man. In his opinion, all the controversies of the schools were annihilated in this highest of all problems; and though Goethe incessantly spurred him on to it, he never could accurately distinguish among the classic, the romantic and the modern; neither could he, like his courtly friend, assume different masks in suc-

cession. Schiller,—modern in Cabal and Love; romantic in Wallenstein and the Maid of Orleans; classic in the Bride of Messina;—is yet everywhere the same, and the various forms vanish in presence of the similar mind.

As, however, during his life, men attempted to disgust him with ideals and to lead him down to vulgarity and to a playing with forms, so in like manner he has, since his death, been often misunderstood and attacked on the same grounds. Some blamed the philosophy, others the morality by which he had falsified poetry. The warmth of feeling, which sometimes appears too lyrical in his drama, has been reproached with being intended only to deceive himself and the public respecting Schiller's true greatness. It is very natural that this greatness should, in consequence of its morality, be hated by the frivolous and vulgar-minded poets of every age; no less by his false friends than by his open enemies. He represented great and noble characters; but the Philistines and the sentimentalists wished nothing but the petty, the frivolists merely the immoral, —the palliation of every vice and of every ignoble weakness. On this last point Schiller was bitterly attacked by the romantic immorality of the school of Schlegel, with a malice, too, which the impure can rarely suppress when opposed to the pure. Schiller was admired by the Philistines and sentimentalists, yet without their understanding him, without it ever occurring to them, that Schiller, in inculcating the nobleness of humanity, was attempting to strengthen and ennoble them.

Yet Schiller became by far the most popular of all our poets; his works were in everybody's hands; in the eyes of the populace his name shone with a lustre superior to every other, even to that of Goethe, who maintained a higher rank only among the educated aristocracy. This great fame was produced by no coterie, no bribed critics, no favour; but simply by the influence which the poetry of Schiller exercised over the majority of the yet uncorrupted public, of the young, or of those who yet think for themselves, and who will always be carried away by the power of truth, by the beauty of true nobility of soul, by the inspiration for everything sacred and noble; and by means of this susceptibility, not merely renders the higher and educated classes, who are too corrupt and weak, ashamed of themselves, but even neutralizes their pernicious influence. I bear a double love for Schiller, because he is not only so noble, but because his own people have acknowledged this, and because his name repels legions of base spirits who are toiling for the destruction of the German character.

That youthfulness which has given Schiller's works such a power over men's minds, is, at the same time, the greatest source of their amiableness. He is the poet of the young, and will always remain so; for all his feelings correspond to the first aspirations of the youthful mind yet uncorrupted, of love yet pure, faith yet unwavering, hope yet glowing, the power of young souls yet unweakened. He is also the favourite of all who have retained their virtue, whose sym-

pathy for truth and rectitude, nobility and beauty, is not yet expired at the market of common life.

Schiller arose with youthful strength in a corrupt and weak age, with a heart wonderfully strong, yet pure as a maiden's. He has purified and invigorated German poetry. He has, with more power and more success than any other, combated the immoral tendency of the taste which prevailed in his age. Unblinded by the dazzling wit of his age, he has ventured to return to the purest and most original feelings of man, and to oppose to the mocker a holy and and severe earnestness. To him is due the glory of having refreshed, purified, and ennobled the spirit of poetry. Germany already enjoys the fruits of this metamorphosis, for since Schiller's appearance the whole of our poetry has assumed a dignified tone. Our neighbours, too, have been seized with this spirit, and they themselves acknowledge that Schiller thus exercises mighty influence over the great change which is at present going on in taste and poetry.

But we have to thank him for more than for purifying the temple of art. His poetical creations have had an effect even beyond the province of art,—upon life itself. The mighty charm of his song has seized not merely upon the fancy, but also upon the consciences of men; and the fiery zeal with which he opposed everything evil or commonplace, the holy inspiration with which he so often victoriously defended the acknowledged rights and the offended dignity of man, in a way

which had been done by none of his predecessors, render his name famous not only among the poets, but even among the noblest sages and heroes who are dear to humanity.

There is no principle, no feeling of honour and right, which may not be confirmed by a beautiful passage, or by an important sentence from Schiller's works; and these expressions live in the mouths of the people.

Schiller has concentrated all his poetical energies in the representation of man,—not of vulgar man, but of the ideal of human magnanimity and beauty, the grandest and most mysterious of all wonders. The external world was used by him merely as a foil to adorn, a contrast or example to illustrate man. He opposes the moral energies of man to the blind might of nature, that he may thus exhibit the former in the height of its dignity, or triumphing nobly, as, for example, in the Diver, and the Surety; or by imparting human sympathies to nature, he gives a moral significancy to her blind powers, as in the Gods of Greece, the Lament of Ceres, Hero and Leander, the Cranes of Ibicus, the Bell, &c. Even in his historical works he seems to care less for the epic progress of the whole, though it may correspond with the necessity of nature, than for the prominent characters,—the element of human freedom, in opposition to that of necessity.

The soul of all Schiller's creations are his ideal characters. He paints only man; but he paints him in his highest moral beauty and sublimity. He thought it almost impossible to give the name

of poetry to that which did not idealize mankind. Had Schiller painted ideas of morality, this would only have spoken in favour of his own morality; it would not have been decisive as to his rank as a poet. On the contrary, the great majority of our earlier and later moral poets, are great sinners against poetry; and it is just as difficult to paint a noble human disposition as to possess it, but nothing is easier than to claim the possession of both powers. When ideals of morality are to be represented in a character, care should be taken that nature does not suffer under the treatment. It is as great an error to attempt to justify an unnatural and false, and, consequently, an unpoetical representation, by the morality of the object, as to conceal the immorality of the object behind the naturalness and grace of the representation. The majority of poets are, in this respect, really like bad painters of saints, who claim a veneration for the vilest daubs, merely because they are intended to represent saints; but few resemble a Raphael, whose saints are really saints, whose art is as holy as the object. Among these few Schiller stands pre-eminent. Even in his earliest productions, which are so often blamed as unnatural, the inward truth vanquishes all extravagance, an extravagance which, on that very account, no longer occurs in his later writings. We possess great poets who have painted other than moral beauties; who were, perhaps, superior to our Schiller in the talent of representation; but none of them have united the interests of virtue and poetry to such an extent as Schiller. We have

no representation of virtue which is more poetical; no poet who is more virtuous.

In Schiller's ideals we meet with no dead mechanical law, no theory, no dry moral system; but a living organic nature, an active life of active men. This ideal nature is the creation of genius. Schiller himself says,—

> The Intellect can repeat what has already been;
> Thou alone, Genius, canst invent new forms.

Genius unfolds from the inmost depths of the higher nature of men. In it there comes to full maturity, what, in others, has slumbered under an earthly covering. This is the wonder which takes us by surprise in the history of men,—that new natures, which no one had calculated, are continually being born among them; natures which can be measured by no standard, yet existing; by which the world itself seems rather regenerated by the new light thus shed upon it, which show us our old wonted existence in a new light, our old nature in a higher state of progress; which open up the mystery concealed within us; which awaken to light the dreaming germ; which unfold the inclinations, capacities, virtues, talents, which we possess; which enrich, ennoble, and exalt us; in a word, which disclose the whole internal and external nature in the refulgence of its own in a higher degree, and in a new magic appearance. This new and more elevated poetical nature is its own poetical world, and the greatest wonder is, that these poetical

worlds are so various, and yet so individual. Greater than the world itself are the worlds thus created in it. One nature blows out into a thousand natures, and each becomes richer, more wonderful, more beautiful, and more tender. This regeneration is the work of genius. Every great genius is a rare plant, of which there is only one specimen, peculiar in form, smell, and colour. The internal bents and vital energies of such a plant is a mystery,—self-created; no one can unriddle it. Who has explained the colour and the odour of flowers? why it should be such in one flower and different in another? Who has ever explained the charm which attracts us so peculiarly to Raphael's pictures? and who can account for the spiritual atmosphere and odour, the internal charms of soul, possessed by Schiller's characters? Here no definition can assist the intellect; it is only by comparison that we can more closely define the inexplicable feeling.

Raphael's name has forced itself upon me, and it cannot be denied that the spirit of moral beauty is as visible in Schiller's poems as that of sensuous beauty is in the pictures of Raphael. Moral beauty has its rise and progress in the history of man; and action, struggle, are the conditions of its existence. Sensuous beauty is like nature, as a whole, seized in a peaceful state of existence.

In this way Schiller's ideals must manifest themselves in conflict; those of Raphael in a soft and exalted peace. Schiller's genius must not shudder at performing the office of the war-

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like archangel Michael; Raphael's genius was only the mild angel whose name he bore. That original inexplicable charm, however, the heavenly magic, the image of a higher world, which lies in the views of Raphael, may be seen in the characters of Schiller. No painter has painted the human countenance, no poet has depicted the human soul, with such grace and majesty of beauty. And as Raphael's genius remains always the same, and that mild, peace-speaking angel in his many appearances, always meets us in the same peace and glory, so, in like manner, Schiller's genius remains always the same; and we see the same warlike angel in Karl Moor, Amalia, Ferdinand, Louisa, Marquis Posa, Max Piccolomini, Thekla, Mary Stuart, Mortimer, Joanna of Orleans, and Wilhelm Tell. The former genius bears a palm-branch, the latter a sword. The former rests confiding on a peace never to be disturbed, immersed in its own nobleness; the latter turns its beautiful angelic face in a threatening and melancholy manner to the monsters of the deep.

The heroes of Schiller are distinguished by a nobleness of nature, which acts upon us as a pure and perfect beauty, like that nobleness which characterizes a picture of Schiller. They have something of a regal nature, which awakens a direct and reverential awe. This beam of purer light shows only the clearer when cast into the dark shadows of earthly corruption, as angels become more resplendent under the mask of hell.

The first secret of this beauty is the angelic

PURITY which is always found in the noblest natures. This nobility of innocence re-appears in the same heavenly features of a pure youthful angel in all the great creations of Schiller. In sunlit glorification, in the form of pure childhood, unarmed yet invulnerable, it appears in Fridolins, like that royal child in the story, which played with the wild beasts in the wood and yet was uninjured by them.

As soon as these creations of Schiller become conscious of their own happiness, the envy of the heavenly powers is awakened against them. Invested with this new and pathetic charm, we see them in Hero and Leander. Adorned with a warlike helm, and blooming with the fire of noble passion, youthful innocence opposes all the powers of hell. Thus has Schiller represented them in the Surety and the Diver,—in the unfortunate lovers, Karl Moor and Amalia,—Ferdinand and Louisa,—and, above all, in Max Piccolomini and Thekla. An unequalled charm of poetry floats over all these moving figures. It is the tone of a lute amidst wild discordant music, the blue of the ether in a hurricane, a Paradise upon the edge of a crater.

If Shakspere's female creations appear to possess more of the charm of a lily-like purity, those of Schiller possess more of the soul of the lily, more of that powerful and life-giving fragrance, bearing, in this respect, more affinity to the creations of Sophocles. They are not weaklings, like the saints of Carlo Dolce or Corregio; they have an innate holy fire of power like the Madonna's

of Raphael. They do not merely move, they inspire us.

The holy innocence of the Maid of Orleans appears most prominent when we see her stand forward as the champion of God. It is the deep mystery of Christianity and Christian poetry, that the salvation of the world proceeds from a pure virgin; the highest power from the purest innocence. In this sense Schiller has composed his Maid of Orleans, and she is the most perfect impersonation of that warlike angel who bears the helm, and waves the banner of heaven.

Schiller has also succeeded in linking this innocence with the noblest development of real manliness. In this class three holy heroes stand pre-eminent: Max Piccolomini, the warrior-youth, pure and undefiled amidst all the vices of the camp and of his home; Marquis Posa, whose mind, though adorned with every intellectual accomplishment, has remained a pure temple of innocence; and, in fine, that stalwart, honest-hearted son of the mountains, Wilhelm Tell, who is, in his way, a fit companion for the Maid of Orleans. Though in them innocence always shines forth in its purest glory, yet Schiller knew how to represent that struggle of an original innocence with the pollution of its own guilt caused by strong passions; and he has raised it before our souls like love, and with the same perfection of art. How deeply does the Magdalen-like character of Mary Stuart touch us! What can be more moving than the victory gained by Karl Moor over himself! In what talented, true, and strik-

ing colours is the struggle which shakes the great mind of Wallenstein and Fiesko delineated!

We now turn to a second secret of the beauty in the ideal characters of Schiller:—this is, their NOBLENESS, their honourable character. His heroes and heroines never belie that pride and dignity which are the mark of a higher nature; and all their expressions bear the stamp of magnanimity and innate nobleness. Everything common-place is their complete antipodes, and those conventional rules which chain and fetter common-place natures. Powerful, free, independent, original, following only the mark of noble nature, Schiller's heroes rend to pieces the web in which common men drag along their common-place life. One great characteristic of Schiller's poetry is, that all his heroes possess that stamp of genius, that imposing majesty of deportment, which even in real life is wont to accompany the highest nobleness of human nature. The seal of Jove is stamped upon every forehead. In his earlier poems, indeed, this free, bold attitude appears a little uncooth and uncivilized; and the poet himself was induced, when living in the elegant Weimar, to attempt to give his Robbers a rather more civilized exterior. But who cannot see beneath the rough cover, the hard, pure diamond of the noble nature which rests within? Whatever weaknesses we may discern in Karl Moor, or even in Cabal and Love, or in Fiesko, I can look upon them only as the follies of the old German Parzival[8], who, when a rough untutored

[8] Parzival, the hero of a poem by Wolfram von Eschenbach, died 1220.

boy, and in childish garb, showed his noble heart, to the confusion of all scoffers; nay, the power of moral beauty in a noble nature cannot in any case have a more touching, more fascinating effect, than when it unconsciously exposes itself to a onesided ridicule.

The third and the highest secret of the beauty of Schiller's characters, is the FIRE OF NOBLE PASSIONS. This is the fire which animates every great heart; it is the sacrificial flame which ascends even unto heaven; the vestal flame guarded by consecrated hands in the temple of God; the Promethean spark brought down from heaven to infuse a godlike soul into man; the Pentecost fire of inspiration in which souls are baptized; the phœnix fire in which our race renews its youth for ever. Without the glow of noble passions, there can be nothing great either in life or in poetry. Every genius bears within him this spark of heavenly birth, and all his creations are interpenetrated by it. Schiller's poetry is a strong and fiery wine; all his words are flames of the noblest feeling. The ideal characters which he has created are the legitimate offspring of his glowing heart,—parted beams of his own internal fire. The advantage of possessing the purest as well as the strongest passion belongs to Schiller above all other poets. No one with so pure a heart equalled him for fire; none who equalled him in fire, possessed his purity. Thus we see the diamond, the purest of all earthly substances, when once set on fire, burn with a splendour and glow, in comparison of which every other fire appears dim and clouded.

Where, we ask, is there to be found a more chaste, a more holy love than that which Schiller felt and breathed into the souls of his lovers? And where, on the other hand, do we find it so fiery and so powerful; invincible against a world in arms; arousing the deepest energies of the soul, and patiently enduring the most trying sacrifices? From its softest charm—from the first mutual glance—from the first gentle beating of the heart, to the tempest of feeling, which shakes the whole heart,—to the awe-striking heroic deed of virgin valour—to the sublime sacrifice of two loving souls, love here unfolds before us the boundless richness of its beauty, like a holy music, which rises gradually from the softest tones to the full tempest of pealing chords.

The glow of an enthusiastic heart in Schiller communicates its influence to everything that can benefit humanity; and here his genius is armed with the flaming sword of heaven: here is began the strife between that warlike angel and the spirits of the deep.

Schiller's pure soul could suffer no unrighteousness; he therefore stept forth panoplied into the lists to fight for eternal RIGHT. Like an inspired prophet he announces the holy doctrine of that blessing which dwells in right, and of that curse which inevitably follows wrong. The truth of his piercing judgment is never clouded by the glow of sensibility, or by the blinding garniture of his language; on the contrary, they only give it a more striking and glorious prominence.

FREEDOM, which is inseparable from right, was

the dearest jewel of his heart. But that unbridled freedom which proceeds from and tends to injustice, is one of the demoniac powers against which his genius wages a deadly war.

We possess no poet who has represented right and freedom with such a fiery zeal, with such a noble adornment of poetry; neither have we any who knew so well how to shun both extremes, tempering his enthusiasm with moderation, and marching onward in the triumphal path of truth.

His genius belongs to mankind. The rights of man were never advocated on higher and nobler principles than by his Marquis Posa. The Maid of Orleans steps into the lists to protect the rights of the people; Wilhelm Tell maintains the rights of the individual. And in all his other heroes we see right and freedom waging an interminable war with arbitrary power and violence, so that Schiller is as much the poet of liberty as of love.

This may suffice, in so far as a few leading ideas can, to give us some general notion of the spirit of Schiller's poetry. Every one who knows Schiller is told by his feelings more than can be here told him.

And these feelings will never be lost,—coming generations and distant lands will participate in them; and to them it will, perhaps, be vouchsafed to have yet more exalted and godlike conceptions of the greatness of Schiller, for his endeavours are to benefit futurity,—a freer and nobler futurity —foreseen by his holy longings and his firm confidence in mankind, to which he has led us, and from which his genius beckons to us with

promise of a noble reward. Many have gone down into the darkness of past ages, there to bind the spirit of man in its pristine fetters. Schiller, with a beaming, angelic countenance, has placed himself at the gate of futurity, has lifted its veil, and given to the longing eyes of men a free and cheerful view of what is to come.

The earnest, solemn disposition which Schiller imparts,—the exalted state to which he raises our souls,—the holy awe which surrounds him, are not, it is true, fitted to please our criticasters, or silly, self-sufficient longing virtuosi, who, in their souls are terrified for him, and therefore criticise him for petty revenge. Men are quick and ready enough to call him unnatural, stiff, pedantic, and coarse, and to decry him as the poet of a licentious youth and people. Truly everything great and noble has, in your eyes, become unnatural, because ye are thoroughly corrupted, and because common-placeness has become a second nature to you. In your eyes virtue appears pedantic, because ye must hear it inculcated from strange lips—because it does not exist in your own hearts. In your eyes all liberty is coarse, because it breaks through your conventional rules, and crushes to the ground your petty idols. Upon you alone rests the disgrace, when the innocent youth and the people, whom ye name the mob, honour and love, more than ye do, the great poet.

Schiller's reflection and declamation have been the principal objects of the attacks of his enemies. There prevails, for example, in the ballad To Joy, a reflection which gives us, in place of poetry,

nothing but philosophical reflections. There prevails in many of the beautiful passages of his tragedies a declamation which 'o'erleaps the modesty of nature' of a dramatic dialogue. But this confounding of philosophy with poetry, of a lyric with a dramatic form, are little errors which concern only the form, and which, therefore, do not detract in the least from the noble spirit which pervades all the works of Schiller. It would be pedantry, were it not that it is perfidious to accuse him of such petty faults of form. Schiller's forms must only answer for what really concerns his character. This is all that people hate. Under all circumstances nothing is more hated by those refined vices, which, covering over their internal vulgarity with external politeness, corrupt the people with showy sophistry, than that honourable nature,—a full and generous heart,—a free and involuntary uprightness, which disregards all private interests,—a moral health, whose very look offends painted vice. In order to be avenged of a virtue of this kind, they call it rude and uncultivated; they pride themselves upon their external advantages, jesting, as the noble officers who ran away at the battle of Jena, formerly did, at those of vulgar birth, who, led on by Schiller, fought there like heroes:—"Good heavens! how awkward these *bourgeois* are; 'pon honour, they they can't even dance an *ecossaise*." This is just the same as if one were to find fault with Schiller's forms, and in so doing to forget his noble spirit.

Schiller has been so often imitated, and his influence over modern schools has been so great, that I shall defer speaking of this point till the

following chapter. I shall here only remark that Theodore Koerner resembles him most as a dramatic, Gustav Pfizer as a lyric poet. Not only the iambus, but even the style, euphony and peculiar phraseology, introduced by Schiller, are become universal, yea, even superabundant in German tragedy. Formerly Klingemann endeavoured, now Raupach endeavours to write tragedies by the dozen in the style of Schiller; a true desecration of poetry, and one which has naturally had an unfavourable influence upon the pleasure with which we read Schiller's works. The most beautiful similes, the noblest sentiment, if it be repeated times without end by imitators, come at last to appear stupid, and we desire to hear nothing more of them. In this way many of the most beautiful passages of Schiller's works have, like certain passages of the Bible, become insipid in our eyes, or, when mentioned, merely raise a smile.

The influence of Schiller upon the patriotic and political poets of Germany was more fortunate. We shall come to them afterwards.

Whilst the storm and pressure assumed the most elevated tendency in Schiller, it fell, on another side, into a proportionally greater degradation. With Goethe, for example, commenced that romantic Don Juanism, which, though under the mask of an all-piercing genius and originality, and of a noble freedom, only reproduced the vulgar frivolity of Kotzebue; or, affecting a godlike despair, was in the end satified with providing for its mere animal wants. We have already seen

that Goethe was peculiarly fond of favouring this fatal tendency. He was seconded by Heinse, who at first raved about art, but at last made offers to one muse after the other, such as no one should make, at least to a goddess. The artist ranging at will through the world, intimate with the beautiful, making pilgrimages to Italy, and there revelling in the memorials of a beautiful and sensuous age, was, of course, pleased with that genial Don Juanism, and must, therefore, be excused. But this moral aberration gave the death-blow to the romantic school which had been so distinguished. What would have become of the Schlegels, of Tieck—how much greater and more popular would they have been, could they have refrained from treading in Heinse's impure footsteps.

The end of the novels of chivalry and freebooting, the transition from this old, honest coarseness, into the all-embracing frivolity, is marked by a novel, which is remarkable as having long been the favourite of the circulating libraries,—I mean the Rinaldo Ridaldini of Vulpius[9], in which a robber, modelled after the Karl Moor of Schiller, is noble and magnanimous, though at the same time an intriguing Don Juan and a general lover. The inclination to play the virtuous hero as well as the voluptuous libertine, the man of fate as well as the vain fop, was first conceived by the great

[9] Christian August Vulpius, born at Weimar, June 22nd, 1763; died, June 26th, 1827: Romantic History of the Past; Anecdotes of the Past; Rinaldo Rinaldini; Magical Novels.

mind of Goethe: it has, however, as is now apparent, ingrafted itself upon the German disposition, for our latest novels have again connected the enthusiasm for political liberty with the *petits soupers;* the sorrow for the Poles, and naked orgies, with a *piquant* charm for the public.

TRUE ROMANTICISM.

The poetical opposition which was formed against the prosaic character of our modern poetry, became in the end exclusively catholic and mediæval; and what is, in the strict sense of the word, denominated Romanticism. This took place after the French Revolution, and was in fact a reaction against it. Modern romanticism had a political origin, though without being itself aware of the circumstance.

If the French Revolutionists had not declared "that God had ceased to reign," if the priests had not been guillotined, the Gothic churches destroyed and cast down,—the German poets, and in particular those of protestant North Germany, would not have been so instantaneously filled with such a love of religion, and even of the ancient forms of Catholicism. If the French had not beheaded their king, the German poets would not have been so quick in announcing the poetical kingdom, mythical legitimacy, divine consecration. If the nobles had not been ill-treated and murdered in France, the German poets would not

have been so forward in praising the beauty and excellence of feudal times. If the precious treasures of art of the middle ages had not been carried away across the Rhine, the German poets would not have been so suddenly inspired with such an enthusiastic love of them. In fine, these poets would not have laid so much stress upon the existence of Germany, neither would that love of their country, which had been so long buried, have been so soon and so proudly revived, had not the conquests of the French hurt our national pride.

German romanticism was opposed to the French Revolution and its consequences, as well as to its primitive causes,—to that modern element which was looked upon as the *primum mobile* of the Revolution. This modern element is commonly said to be the cause of that trivial similarity which exists in states as well as in modes of dress,—of that self-complacent commonplaceness, which has as little need of a God as of poetry; and the French Revolution has only shown, on a large scale, phenomena which had long before existed in private life—for instance, the destruction of everything sublime, varied, and beautiful, by means of a vulgar and insipid ugliness. But in proportion as old things were continually being destroyed in reality, the more zealously were the poets employed in reproducing them in their former wholeness, in a complete form, and in the first freshness and vigour of all their hues, and in comparing this beautiful ideal with that stupid, insipid reality.

Men are, at present, very often unjust to these romanticists. We forgot at what time they originated. The zealous love with which they, mindful of the ancient renown of Germany, attempted, by reminding their contemporaries of it, to inflame their patriotism, is, notwithstanding its many exaggerations, worthy of all praise. The poetical fanaticism with which they attempted to force upon our notice the wonders of the ancient catholic system, is very easily understood when we consider how much they must have been surprised by its being again discovered in the age of tails, family novels, and the congress of Rastadt. The deep degradation of the country consequent upon its present condition justified that enthusiastic zeal felt for Germany's older and better condition.

But we must again introduce distinctions when speaking of this species of poetry. The old German poetry contains two elements,—one heathen, the other Christian; it therefore has become both a poetry of *Sagas*, and a poetry of catholic legends and chivalry. This is the reason that our modern romanticism has favoured either the heathen superstitions and the popular tales, or the catholic stories about saints, priests, and knights. Ludwig Tieck is the representative of both kinds of this species.

The old popular stories always resounded like a long deep tone in perfect unison with the ancient belief and superstition of the people through all the changing melodies of the spirit and fashion of the age. During the period of French en-

lightenment it sank so low that it almost became extinct. It served only as a butt to wit and irony in heroic poems; for example, in those of Wieland. The amiable Musæus[1] also treated many of the most significant stories in the style of the French fairy tales,—of the Blue Library[2]; yet his popular tales will always be among the most pleasing in the German language, and he has certainly contributed much to the diffusion of a taste for the old legends (*Sagen*).

Herder was the first who again looked upon the legends in a serious and national light; he was the first who proved that there existed a profound meaning in the jocular and sportive fairy poetry; and that its purpose was not merely to excite laughter by the drollness of its stories, or to astonish men by the fairy-like splendour so common in operas, but that it was, in its primitive genuineness, of invaluable worth, as voices of the nations,—as remnants of a wonderful past.

The poetry in these old legendary stories made a very strong impression upon the minds of his contemporaries. Notwithstanding all the enlightenment, about which so much was said, men were irresistibly attracted by the sacred obscurity of this poetry. Its great effect doubtless lies in its appearing not as the artificial handiwork of men, but as a direct revelation of nature. These

[1] Johann Karl Musæus, born at Jena, 1735; died at Weimar, October 28th, 1787: The German Grandison; popular tales (*Volksmärchen*).

[2] A collection of tales, collected and published by Nicolai, in Berlin.

tales were not invented by the sportive imagination of the poet; they sprung involuntarily from the minds and feelings of the people. They are inseparably connected with the history of the people. Everything external manifests itself, expresses itself, and becomes a matter of history. In the reflection, therefore, of the legends and history of any people or age, its soul is opened up to us; its philosophy is laid completely bare. As these legends always lead us back to the practical ground of history, so, in like manner, history always leads us back to the ideal province of legendary tales. All legends are historical; but all histories of that period are, in their turn, fabulous, significant, and mystical. In both cases, the feelings of the people are expressed in deeds, which are themselves as strange and ominous as these feelings. All these deeds are without meaning, if we do not deduce them from that state of feeling; the common histories, therefore, of the middle ages, which followed the nomadic migrations of the nations, are perfectly intolerable. They must be looked upon in the sense of the legends as revelations of the minds and feelings of the people.

Viewed in this light the legends are an inexhaustible fountain of poetry; the matter is immense, and, as yet, is generally so little used, that modern poets may obtain as much as they want. The ancient form in which these legends are contained, has become strange to us; or the great majority of these exist only in such a rude form, that we must polish them before they can be fit for presentation. This was the reason that our

best poets vied with one another in reviving the old valuable legends of the people, and rendering them again popular in a new form.

In this originated modern romanticism,—a style of poetry, in the modest garments of which is concealed the noblest poetry. Our greatest poets distinguished themselves in this path, and most so when they adhered to the genuine old tales. We may mention as instances, Goethe, Schiller, and Stollberg. Bürger paid very great attention to the romantic ballad, but he disfigured it by that boorish coarseness which he mistook for the popular tone. But as men had not, at that time, any idea of a really patriotic aim in the return to this style of poetry, the conception and execution of the ballads and romances were long very fluctuating. Thus, for example, a classic Grecian subject was treated like a legend of the middle ages; and legends of the middle ages like classic elegies. This was done both by Goethe and Schiller.

Tieck[3] was the first who introduced a domestic tone into this species of poetry, thus showing that we must go back to the illusion of the age in which the legends originated, before we can feel its true spirit. He, therefore, prosecuted his inquiries among the people and children,—the only

[3] Ludwig Tieck, born in Berlin, May 31st, 1773; alive in Dresden: novels and tales,—Abdallah; Wilhelm Lovell; Peter Leberecht; Puss in Boots; Franz Sternbald's Wanderings; Zerbino's Journey in Search of Good Taste; Kaiser Octavianus; fantasies; tales; Der Geheimnissvolle; The Old English Theatre; Dramatists who preceded Shakspere; translated many of Shakspere's plays; dramaturgical papers.

classes among whom candour is still to be found. He was bold enough to present to the notice of an enlightened century, children's tales (*Kindermährchen*). He dared to drive away the clouds from the face of the moon, and again to show us the moon-enlightened magic night of the infancy of our nation; to tell us of those world-old memorials, and to make the most secret chords of feeling resound with affecting and long-forgotten melodies.

Herder was only the porter of romanticism; the cold intellect of Goethe could never penetrate into its depth and glowing enthusiasm: Tieck was the first poet who entered into it with his whole heart and soul.

But we must not look upon Tieck as a mere imitator, who imitated the forms of the middle ages, as the Grecomanists did those of the classics. He had a higher vocation. He is no mere antiquarian poet, who, with retroverted neck, looks back into the long vista of by-gone ages. He has rather formed a living band between the past and the present, building up a new and genuine German poetry upon the foundation of the old. As a mediator between the two great steps which the German nation has made in its progress to civilization, he will always occupy the highest place in the history of its culture. Modern German poetry was formed out of Protestantism, and in accordance with ancient models; but in direct opposition to the old German poetry. The one-sided protestant style of poetry, which disliked everything wonderful, became, in the hands of

our greatest poet, humane, and cosmopolitan; yet it often wandered away from German individuality, and followed after strange models. But our poetry gradually regained, along with its independence, its national character. Inspired by its own strength, it repelled everything foreign, and delighted to honour, for their own sake, those peculiarities which had been so long despised. But the time had at last to come, when the internal affinity between ancient and modern Germans became clear. German feelings and sentiments had regained their former position. They felt that those old thoughts and feelings, which had been "married to immortal verse" by "the youthful world's grey fathers," were most intimately connected with themselves. Whatever progress we have, in the course of time, made towards a higher state of development; whatever foreign elements have become, as it were, part of our nature, still our original idiosyncrasy has remained unaltered. The necessary consequence of this knowledge was, that we either tuned our poetry in accordance with the notes of that of ancient times; or our heart by the sensibility of that of men of old. There are, as a matter of course, many striking antipathies and exaggerations to be met with, when contrasting this style of poetry with that of earlier and protestant times. Filled with that enthusiasm with which the Germans are wont to regard every object, antiquarian enthusiasts and pedants exalted the old German poetry above every other, whilst their adversaries condemned it as mere barbarism. Yet it was na-

tural that others should form, between these two extremes, a middle party. Tieck was called upon to become the mediator. The genius of ancient Germany was born again in this most national of our poets; and in him it renewed its youth like a phœnix. His poems are so intensely German, that they prove the affinity which exists between two far-distant ages. They bear as much affinity to the middle ages as to our own. This poet, who is so significant and marvellous in his powers, marks a culminating point in our modern culture, which will be followed by incalculable consequences. Our poetry has obtained a new and firmer foundation by means of Tieck. At a former period it was based upon the classic models, from whence it ranged away into the realms of enthusiasm and idealism; but since Tieck arose it has again taken root in our primitive German peculiarities, so that it will sooner or later bear a blooming flower of national creations. The two tendencies are now at war with each other. The romantic, or rather the national taste, has for some time been rather on the decline; imitation of things foreign has again become prevalent. But this will not last. Poetry will advance in the flowery path of Tieck.

I look upon Tieck as the most German of our poets. And he shows that he is so most, perhaps, when he involuntarily pays court to those foreign powers, which seem so ill at ease in our literature. He who has been seized by the glowing fangs of a foreign pleasure, like the author of William Lovell, and who can, nevertheless, unfold the

whole loveliness of a childlike mind, the whole power of the German nationality; whose birth is genuine,—he will be able to resist the fiery proof of Thetis; he will, like the Horned Sigfrit[4], be charmed by the glowing and poisonous breath of the dragon.

In like manner as Schiller made us acquainted with conscious purity and prudent strength, Tieck led us back to that unconscious innocence and naïve luxuriance of power, which characterized the past ages of Germany. Yet both agree in one point,—in opposing to the vulgarity of modern life, the pictures of that holy innocence and power. As far as mere tendency is concerned, there is no difference between the young enthusiasts of Schiller, who fight for the rights of the sons of the gods, in opposition to the surrounding populace, and Tieck's young smiling heroes, who do the very same, without knowing that they are doing so. In both cases, a noble, generous disposition, which is, in action, capable of the noblest magnanimity, and of the greatest sacrifices, and, in feeling, of the greatest delicacy, stands opposed to the wretched weakness, the anxious calculations, and the vulgar thoughts of modern times. It is only in form that the two poets differ. Schiller was attached to universal humanism and Kant's Criticism of Reason, while Tieck adhered to German nationality and the system of Schelling.

[4] The Horned Sigfrit is the title of one of the most popular German *Volksbücher:* it is the North-German prose of the South-German poetical *Nibelungen Lied.*

Tieck was in all respects a product of the romantic reaction of the age. He was not like Görres, as a born Catholic and a Rhinelander a genuine son, a late production of the middle ages; he, being born a Protestant and a Berliner, was prejudiced against the middle ages; and that all-powerful sympathy, which, in various epochs, has attracted or exchanged the opposite poles, was the producing cause of that remarkable revival of mediæval and catholic poetry in the very centre of a protestant and modern age. It is on this account, that this phenomenon is of importance. We can see from this, that it is not merely a late old age,—a flower in autumn; but that it is something young,—a flower in spring.

Tieck at first could treat the ancient fabulous tales only in a frivolous manner. In his Ostrich Feathers his style closely resembled that of Musæus, and even in his first dramatized tales, he was too much of a mere jester. But the intrinsic charm of the tales slid by degrees into his soul, so that he soon made himself master of the whole ancient magical kingdom of the popular legends, and purified it from modern rubbish, from the modern abuse of forms and thoughts, thus restoring it to its genuine naïveté.

He passed over from the ancient heathen legends (*Sagen*) into catholic mysticism; from the sacred primitive wood, into the variegated obscurity of the Gothic cathedral.

His enticing Bugle-call (*Waldhörnerklang*) was the first thing which reminded us of our return into the Loneliness of the Wood (*Waldeinsamkeit*).

What influence could Broke's Earthly Pleasure in God, or Kleist's Spring possess, when compared with these new yet world-old views of nature? They were like a Dutch dairy, compared with a noble ancient forest. All that we possessed on the subject of landscape-painting, before the time of Tieck, is scarcely worth mentioning. Our poetry had for its subject only men, home, the town, or, at most, it sometimes took a walk for its health. Though the great and noble remnants of the old German forests lay all around us, yet no one seemed willing to remember that the Germans are the sons of the forest, and that two thousand years ago poetry rode among the firs, mounted on a white palfrey, adorned with flowers, awakening the echoes, and inhaling the odour of the forest.

In what did even Rousseau's much-bepraised return to nature consist? In a new system of education in a foundling hospital. If men wish to recover that childlike nature which exists within them, they must go back to external nature in its primitive sacred wildness, in its virgin state, while yet uncontaminated by any touch of culture; they must press it like a child to their bosoms and then again fight with hostile spirits. Yes, in spite of all civilization, the mysterious sympathy which men feel for uncultivated nature will always form the fundamental principle of its poetical character.

In Tieck we are surprised by the wood, by the wild and picturesque beauty of nature. But as soon as we become more intimate with it, we feel

that there is a deeper mystery of nature. There arises a wonderful rustling among the trees. Amidst the deep gloom, the spirits flicker in flashes of green and gold. Amidst the wildness of nature Tieck saw the 'good people' ruling; for example, he saw the spirits of the elements, which are as old as the history of our nation, and inseparable from it. The belief in fairies was more widely diffused among the nations of the north of Germany than among those of the south; and it was a source of the fairest and most beautiful poetry.

Is there not something fairy-like in his nature, which, sometimes devoting itself with the most ardent affection, locks us in the sweetest caresses; sometimes flies from us with the greatest levity and indifference, or suddenly insults and scorns us with a petty and unexpected malice? Yet, does this fairy nature not appear to be overmastered by a higher one? Has it not, as the lovely though trickish Undine gained a soul by her devotion to the knight, acquired this strength of character by the transition from the heathen tales of the wood to the legends and chivalrous poetry of the Catholics?

His masterpieces are Genoveva and Octavian, which bear the same relation to each other that the lily does to the rose, or faith to love. In the former, we find religion ennobled in the fidelity of a woman; in the latter, chivalry and love are displayed in all their romantic charm. In both, the leading idea is, that the Christian religion ennobles human nature; that it strengthens it, by

freeing it from all alloy, that it overmasters its fickleness by giving it peace, rest, and a sunlike clearness; but that, on the other hand, that original, well-organized, powerful, and beautiful nature benefits the exalted belief of the Christian. Tieck could not endure to think of God in the common protestant manner, as a mere schoolmaster, or as the sick-nurse of an ill and wretched people, and to seek the criterion of true religion in the poverty and hatefulness of all its symbolical and religious relations to the world and to nature. On the contrary, he sought this criterion in the luxuriance and beauty of these relations, and praised a religion which turned men into saints and heroes, and which imparted a holiness to all the beauties of life.

When we recollect, further, that the modern protestant poetry, despising the poverty of its religious ceremonial, rejected all religions without exception, and created that 'literature of despair' which manifested itself sometimes in the suicide of a Werter, sometimes in the bold self-deification of a Faust,—when this wilderness of subjectivity, the boundless caprice of the insatiable Ego, whirling along like Phaeton in the chariot of the sun, has always continued to increase since the days of Goethe,—Tieck's catholic poems acquire, by this contrast, a new value and charm.

How noble, how lovely, do Tieck's sunlike and pure figures appear when compared with these contradictory egotists of Goethe, and the whole modern Don Juanism! They are like a high

sunlit mountain compared with a storm in the mist. The internal peace, security, and harmony of an innate nobility of soul, or a victory over one's own passions, gained by the aid of religion, are what our poetry, as well as our life, are most deficient in, though they do not feel the want of them.

Truth was the mysterious band of that harmony of man with God, the world, and himself, which was revived in Tieck's noble poetical creations. Men trusted God, who had promised grace; and he was faithful who had promised. Since that time, distrust has prevailed. "Who knows what is beyond? Who knows how things look yonder? The promises are not of God, they are of the priests. If we are not certain what we may with justice ask from that unknown God, we do not require to perform those duties which he lays upon us." In this way, every sin is the consequence of distrusting God. And should he who distrusts God put more confidence in men? Will not he who has once distrusted them, feel himself perfectly justified in becoming an egotist?

Truth, thou fairest of all the angels of God! thou hast returned to heaven! thou still livest here amongst us only in fairy tales!

Can our age imitate that credulous Past in striking a true and honest league with truth? Tieck has not proved this to be possible. Modern times, the element in which he was born, has overcome him. Tieck must, like Undine, return to that fickle element from which he arose. The nature of the fairies predominated in him. In

his later novels we find an irony, a talented mocking of everything, with a resignation that it cannot alter it;—a cold resignation, which either becomes earnest and melancholy, or falls back into the old cheerfulness of youthful remembrance.

Tieck, after he became a Catholic, combined with his credulous ennobling of the middle ages, the greatest sarcasm against modern times. The Prince Zerbino and The World Turned Topsy-turvy, were exclusively devoted to this purpose. Here, and still more in his excellent Fortunatus, we find young, strong, and lively poetry, opposed to weak and old-fashioned prose; greatness and nobleness of soul to vulgar and petty egotism. At a later period, Tieck gave up this contrast; he no longer manifested any predilection for the light, or dislike to the dark sides of his figures; he treated all in the same way; nay, he even took peculiar pleasure in any refined way which rendered the moral and distinguished ridiculous; while on the contrary, he excused errors, however gross, by some humorous allusion; so that, in the end, we felt that it was all one to mankind, whether it laboured to be wise or courtly, or took pleasure in ordinary follies.

It is an affecting circumstance, to think that Tieck sunk from his romantic elevation down to this state of resignation; but, he has in it manifested the inexhaustible richness of mind in a new way. It was permitted for but a short time to be such an enthusiast as he was; it was an ebullition of youth and love. When he awoke, the old

cloister, in which he slumbered side by side with his brother monk Wackenroder[5], and in which he had dreamed his fairest dreams, was changed into a manufactory. Wheels were whirling, bobbins were whizzing. It cannot be denied that utilitarianism has taken possession of the land; we must, therefore, resign ourselves to take a good breakfast after a romantic dream, and to let the world with its wheels and bobbins go as it likes.

If Tieck had not been so very romantic, his novels would have met with universal applause. But the great majority of the rationalistic Germans being offended at his Catholicism, distrusted him, even where he was a man of to-day, and as rational as possible, fearing probably that some catholic infection lay hid behind his sound sense. But Tieck would never have acquired this graceful resignation, this amiable sympathy, nay, even tenderness for a world, which many despise, had he not been at first a romanticist; had he not filled his whole soul with poetry and love. The pearl, it is true, fell from the shell, but the broken shell reflected the world in the glitter of mother-of-pearl. Whatever he touched assumed a poetical hue, even when he wished to express indifference and contempt rather than interest.

Tieck's irony is the objective side of that fea-

[5] Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, born at Berlin, 1772; died, ibid, 1797: Effusions (Herzensergeissungen eines Kunstliebenden Klosterbruders) of an Art-loving Monk; Franz Sternbold's Wanderings, edited and continued by Tieck.

ture of which humour is the subjective side. As humour reveals the sentiments of the poet himself, irony shows the whole external world in that two-fold sense, which seems to be in everything that exists. If the external world seem simple and self-satisfied, when compared with humour, whilst discordant powers contend with one another in the human mind, in irony; the mind, on the other hand, is perfectly clear and peaceful, whilst only the external world appears entangled in inexplicable contradictions, with which the poet, fixed on a firm basis, amuses himself. But the pleasure of making one's self acquainted with life in these contradictions, of knowing men by their foibles, and the poetical consistency of applying the diminishing glass to large objects, the microscope to small objects; of ridiculing the estimable, praising the despised, and, in the end, of comprehending all the phenomena of life in the general confession,—"we are all but little worth,"—and in one negation, which scorns all honest exertions and excuses every vulgarity,—that is a dangerous path in which Tieck has conducted poetry. For many begin where he ceased, and give us the stupid and silly disenchantment without the beautiful enchantment which preceded it; the remaining thorns without the rose. A heart, which has ceased to be enthusiastic, is a very different thing from a heart which has never felt the glow of enthusiasm.

Arnim[6], who is a Protestant and a Prussian

[6] Ludwig Arhim von Arnim, born at Berlin, January 26th,

nobleman of the celebrated family of Arnheim, resembles Tieck the most of all the German romanticists. In him the reproduction of the middle ages went on to a greater extent,—chronologically speaking at least: Tieck ranged from the time of the old legends (*Sagen*) down to the era of the Hohenstauffen; Arnim came down to the Reformation, devoting the greater part of his attention to the later popular stories, ballads, and the carnival-plays of the citizens; nay, he was even bold enough to introduce among his descriptions of modern life, a piety and chivalry, which were intended to prove that romanticism had really never ceased, but that it continued to exist in Protestantism, which he was not inclined to give up. However beautiful and noble this pride of birth and creed may be, it was the cause of much embarrassment to Arnim. Modern society was opposed to romanticism, so that the noble, the delicate, the deeply-poetical Arnim could not obtain nearly so much popularity as was accorded to the vulgar and common-place Kotzebue.

In addition to all this, Arnim's imagination was of such a luxuriant, flickering, volatile, and dreamy character, that, unable to restrain its richness, or tame its strength, he allowed it to carry him away so far that he often lost the thread of his story, and was lifted from his feet into the air, God knows where, so that it is impossible to see the end or aim of his story. This

1781; died at Berlin, January 21st, 1831; Des Knaben Wunderhorn; Gräfin Dolores; Die Kronenwächter; The Winter-Garden (a series of tales).

was hurtful to the feelings of the great majority of readers, for men are fonder of a sparing order than a rich confusion.

His Halle and Jerusalem, his Crown-watchers (*Kronenwächter*), suffer in a particular manner from this over-loading of fancy; and the obscure and mysterious leading idea of these works increases the uncertainty of the reader, who sees one variegated dream after another hurry past him in the wild poetical chase. The Countess Dolores has more internal harmony in this respect; indeed it is Arnim's masterpiece. Yet even in it, his fancy ranges on every side; these excrescences, however, are ingeniously dovetailed into the whole, as episodes, without destroying its connection. The poet is like a giant tree in the forests of South America, which has grown up to an immense size, yet which scarcely seems to know that, in addition to its own flowers, it carries those of hundreds of parasite plants of the most various hues,—parasite plants which twine about it from root to branch, weighing it down by their weight. All his minor tales and dramas are, like the single episodes of his greater works, of a lovely character; each perfect in itself, and painted with a graceful touch of pencil, such as Goethe alone could equal in the best parts of Wilhelm Meister.

If heathenish, fairy-like nature and Christian chivalry always remain separated in Tieck, in Arnim they always appear united in one spirit, there striving with each other. A strange commixture of the most modern levity with the deep-

mindedness of the middle ages,—of the most common guilt with the most uncommon repentance. It is easy to see that the poet is a Protestant. Religion is not with him as with the Catholics, the loved one, into whose arms he throws himself in a delirium of joy, but the friend, the mother from whom he seeks consolation, and the stern judge who will impose a penance upon him. Yet the sin is of such an amiable character, the sanguine temperament of the female is depicted with such an adherence to nature, and in such true situations, that we must allow that the somewhat coquettish repentance which follows it is quite of a corresponding character.

Yet these womanish affectations and fancies, which are so common in Arnim, are all pervaded by a trait of the noblest manliness. Arnim was a patriot, and felt deeply the sorrows and disgrace of his country; nay, he never pretended to be ignorant that this occupying of himself with the muses and graces, (a charge to which he himself was obnoxious,) was but poor consolation for an age which required heroes. He oftens betrays his secret dislike to that effeminate waste of time which is produced by loving and verse-making, —nay, even by the whole of that scribbling so loved by the Germans—

> Since Germany in books alone is named,
> The labour of the Germans these have claimed,
> And not the council. Driven from state-affairs,
> They are immersed in literary cares.
> Poor business-people, idle, without bread,
> Soldiers, without a prize, where blood is never shed.

This was the reason that he took so prominent a part in those works of literature which were carried on upon the principle of recalling to the memory of the people that fairer and nobler age which had gone by. In pursuance of these views he united with Clemens Brentano in publishing, under the strange title of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (The Boy's Wonder-horn), a large collection of old German ballads, which exercised a considerable influence upon our modern lyric poetry.

Brentano[7] was even less popular than Arnim, though his Ponce de Leon, which is composed in the spirit of Shakspere and Calderon, is a very pleasant work, and though his somewhat strange Foundling of Prague contains many single passages, at least, of great beauty.

Novalis[8] had even less power than Arnim over the luxuriant fulness of his mind. He too was a North German, a nobleman, a Protestant, and sprung from the celebrated family of Hardenberg. In him the mystic deep-mindedness of the ancient romanticism seemed again revived. He had no sympathy with single or limited phenomena; only the whole world could be the matter which he undertook to treat in a poetical spirit.

Even during the highest pitch of civilization

[7] Clemens Brentano, born at Frankfort, 1777; still alive: Des Knaben Wunderhorn; Ponce de Leon; Der Gold-faden, &c.

[8] Novalis (real name Friedrich Freiherr von Hardenberg,) born at Wiederstedt-Mannsfeld in Prussia, May 2nd, 1772; died March 25th, 1801: Heinrich von Ofterdingen; Hymns to Night; The Pupils at Lais; fragments. See Mrs. Austin's Characteristics of Goethe, vol. i. p. 307, sqq., and Carlyle's Works.

ever attained by the ancients, there had arisen great world-poems,—cosmogonies,—in which were reflected the creation and existence of the world. All possessed, in a greater or less degree, the elements of a clear system. The problem was, to arrange the boundless variety of the world under one well-ordered system. Philosophical systems arose from among the cosmogonies and religious systems, in so far as they undertook to represent the world in a dogmatical manner; and did not merely try in a critical manner what was possible, but said apodictically,—so it is! All these dogmatical systems were caused by a poetical enthusiasm; by a higher revelation; by visions; by a reflection of a vivid imagination; they are therefore, for the most part, promulgated in similes, and in a prophetic holy language. No one denies their poetical character and value, even though the whole critical philosophy of the schools should deny their philosophical value, and wish to see them completely banished from the province of philosophy. Yet the truth is often more easily comprehended in those poetical revelations, than in a limited criticism.

Their poetical value consists partly in their contents, partly in their form. Their contents are the eternal and great wonder of the world. They mystify us; they show us wonders, even in the comprehensible; whilst, on the contrary, criticism often endeavours to render what is really wonderful, intelligible and common-place. They do not strive for philosophical effect, for the annihilation of miracles, for explanations for the intel-

lect, but only for poetical effect, for the strengthening of miracles, for the interest of the feelings and the imagination.

The poetical form of these world-poems must be sought less in the pictures and the solemnity of the style, than in the general architecture of the building, in the harmonious arrangement of the system. It is not inconsistent with the conception of the Beautiful to suppose that it can exist in a system,—in a structure, whether logical or material. The poetical charm of harmony discloses itself in deep mathematical combinations,—in the province of matter by architecture and music,—in that of mind by systems. Neither in architecture nor in music are there sufficient materials for the refined and artistical operations of harmony; it is only in the harmony of the mind, that this species of art reaches its maximum. If, however, the mathematical part of the two former of these arts force itself upon the notice of our senses, this higher harmony remains concealed from the bodily eye and ear, so that we need a higher sense to perceive it; a sense which is very rarely met with. We, therefore, when examining ingenious fabrics of this kind, commonly attend only to the individual parts; most men find it too difficult to make themselves masters of the whole, to become thoroughly acquainted with its construction, or they never waste a thought on the existence of the art which is concealed within it. They have no conception of that higher music in which the notes are ideas.

This species of poetry originates in vision; its

element is the mystification of the universe; its form is harmony. Jacob Böhme[9] is the most distinguished German who has written in this style. All his works are poetical visions, in which he saw common nature in a mystical magic light, which resembled that of the golden glimmer of the redness of the morn; he looked into its internal form and construction, down to the very heart and centre, as into a transparent crystal castle. He represents this mysterious structure which is hid from vulgar eyes, in the most gorgeous lineaments and mazes, such as have been excelled by no philosopher. All the ideas about the geometry of solids, Gothic architecture, and the art of fugues, are to be found in Jacob Böhme's wondrous structure of nature. In the modern natural philosophers, the material mass of ideas outweighs the art of construction. They generally build according to mere geometrical relations, without ever thinking of any higher harmony. On the contrary, they gain on the prosaic and philosophical side by a greater sum of experimental ideas. In Jacob Böhme, art preponderated; in the modern natural philosophers, matter preponderates. He makes much out of little; they make little out of much. His very errors possess a high poetical charm; those of the latter, on the contrary, borrow their show only from truth.

[9] Jacob Böhme, called the Teutonic Philosopher, born at Görlitz, 1575; died 1624: Aurora's Dawn in the East; Description of the three principles of the Being of a God (English, by William Law).

The systems of natural philosophy are the noblest of our modern philosophical poems, or rather poetical revelations in a systematic form. In them the whole world seems dipped in the magic light of the wonderful; the most common-place thing appears significant and mysterious; everything is harmonious; everything looks as if it had been solemnly adorned and arranged for the festival of the Most High. We look into the deep connection of nature, as into a gorgeous building; and into the history of the world, as into a drama. Everything real appears artificial; everything common-place becomes a miracle. The most sublime poetical impression is produced by a survey of the whole; yet even its single parts surprise us by the novelty of the relations; by a harmony between far distant things, of which no one had ever before dreamed; by the strangeness of the contrast, the beauty of the reflection. An endless richness of enjoyment streams down upon us, so that we fancy we are about to be overwhelmed in a sea of poetry. But few, very few, know how to avail themselves of this enjoyment, because it can be appreciated only by a far-seeing intellectual organ. The great majority of men enjoy everything only in unconnected parts, because they are not in a condition to comprehend and retain much at once. The noblest structures and most harmoniously arranged systems, must, therefore, remain for ever closed to them. They go from one particular to another without ever attempting to survey the whole. In consequence, however, of this manner of proceeding, even single particu-

lars remain shut to them. They therefore look upon the single particulars of a work on the philosophy of nature, as wonderful, but senseless arabesques.

Novalis formed the transition from the strict architectural, to the unfettered and picturesque form. He introduced his philosophy under the form of a historical novel; yet his wonderful poem is constructed in a manner altogether architectural; his characters partake less the nature of free personages, than of mere personified ideas, which have, as it were, been incorporated into the mighty system of ideas. He entertained the monstrous thought of showing the universe on its poetical side, nay, even on every poetical side at the same time; of linking together everything that has a being, nature, mind, and history, in one boundless poetry; of building together every imaginable beauty in one great cathedral of poetry. He has therefore adopted not merely heaven and earth into his poem, but also the views, the belief, and the myths of all nations. He drew everything to his own noble art; he has poured over everything its semblance of love. Inasmuch as he united all things with his love, he was himself the god of his rich and boundless world. It has already been said that Novalis has translated Fichte's god into poetry. That godlike Ego, which, in Fichte, imposed the stern duty of self-creator, solemnizes, with Novalis, the first sabbath, and sits upon the throne of its excellence, collecting around it all the charms of heaven and earth, which serve it with devotion. What was

in Fichte manly will, was, in Novalis, the love of men; both are equally original, unfettered, boundless, godlike.

Yet the too-presumptuous poet was overcome by the richness of his matter; he was like the Titan, when he attempted to become God, crushed under the mountains which he himself had piled up. What remains of his works is an immense Torso, broken before it was completed; an Egyptian temple, on a gigantic plan, only begun, yet already half destroyed, and covered with hieroglyphics.

The lovely simplicity of his few lyric poems, (which are almost all on pious subjects,) form a moving and surprising contrast to his wonderful world-allegory, Heinrich von Ofterdingen, and the Fragments, which, like remnants of a former world, tell of a power of creation yet bolder and more strange.

Friedrich Schlegel, whom Novalis enriched with ideas, but who, in style, imitated Goethe, was too manysided to be classed under any one species of poetry. He did much to advance the cause of romanticism, principally by giving it that political tendency, by means of which it assisted in supporting the reaction against the influence of France. He was not satisfied with writing patriotic poems, and with fostering in the tenderest manner the ancient recollections of Germany, he also became a Catholic, served the Austrian cabinet in opposition to France, and endeavoured, as a philosophical historian, to impart to Catholicism a new importance, so as to be able to use it as a weapon against the influence of France.

He was a very influential member of the league of the hierarchy and the old monarchy, in opposition to the frivolous French democracy and military despotism.

Yet he belongs less to romanticism than to that prodigality which we shall, in a subsequent chapter, on the Mixture of all Tastes, examine more closely. He was thoroughly master of the classics, whom he imitated as a poet, and criticised as a literary historian. He was the first German who occupied himself with the study of the Sanscrit, a study which opened up to our view, a new, rich, and wonderful world of observation. He also paid the greatest homage to the frivolity of modern times, though this was in direct contradiction to his hierarchical tendencies. Even the most abandoned Parisian wives of the Sansculottes who had become rich, could not, in their Grecian costume, be more shameless than the Lucinda of the pious Schlegel. Yet it must be acknowledged that pleasure is here palliated with the same artistical enthusiasm as in the works of Heinse; and Schlegel, whose mystical tendency cannot be here denied, and who, by his intercourse with Novalis, was accustomed to paradoxes, fancying that he could unite the most degraded sensual pleasure with the most exalted feelings, proclaimed a Religion of Pleasure.

This shameless book, and the circumstance of his being a convert, of his coming forward as a patriot, not merely against the influence of France, but also against every struggle for freedom which agitated Germany, not only against

political, but even against religious freedom, against the Reformation, &c., and of his having, with the mercenary pen of a partizan, come forward as a philosophical historian, and written a picture of the past very far from the truth, this rendered him unpopular; this has not been pardoned to his distinguished talents and his former merits as a patriot.

Oehlenschläger[1], who is at least half a German, has, like Tieck, drawn upon the old legends. But he has confined himself to those of the north, which are almost all tragical. Desirous of fitting them for the stage, he wrote them in iambics; but our modern stage is too little and confined for the gigantic forms of the tales of the North. His edition of the Island of Felsenberg, a novel full of rich and enthusiastic loveliness, is far more attractive. But he did not confine himself to Norse and German subjects. He also composed very pretty Eastern fairy tales, in the cheerful and independent style of Tieck. His celebrated drama, Correggio, became the fruitful progenitor of the dramas of painting, which arose in great numbers alongside of the novels of painting, after Heinse, in his Ardinghello, and Tieck, in

[1] Adam Oehlenschläger (a Dane), born November 14th, 1779; alive; professor of philosophy and the fine arts, in Copenhagen: dramas,—Aladdin or the Wonderful Lamp; Correggio (Blackwood, vol. 8); The Varingi in Constantinople; Hakon Jarl, &c. &c.; The Island in the South Sea, (Der Insel Felsenburg, see Foreign Quarterly Review, viii. 1); lyric poems; novels; besides many works in Danish.

his Sternbalds' Wanderings, had made the romantic life of the artist the object of poetry.

Romanticism was as much inspired at the sight of the architecture and painting of the middle ages, as by the songs of love and chivalry, the legends and traditionary tales. Nothing, therefore, but a tribute of gratitude was paid, when these old painters were introduced into novels and dramas. Then Albrecht Dürer, Van Dyck, &c., as well as Ostade, trod the stage. Hagen wrote a whole crowd of histories of the Nürnberg artists; Kind[2] dramatised the private life of Van Dyck. The ancient poets too, received their share of attention. Furchau wrote an historical, yet very interesting life of Hans Sachs, which contained a general review of the Meister-singers of that age; Deinhardstein introduced Hans Sachs on the stage. These are only the more important works. In addition to these, there are dramas, romances, and novels of painting, by the dozen.

Goethe depicted the poet, in Clavigo and Tasso; the player, in Wilhelm Meister. At an after period, Hoffmann added the musician. The painters, however, were still most popular. The cause of this mushroom-like growth of histories of artists, is to be found principally in the necessity felt by the poets, to follow the example of Goethe in mirroring and ogling himself, by

[2] Johann Friedrich Kind, born at Leipzig, March 4th, 1768; alive, in Saxe-Gotha: novels,—Van Dyck's Life in the Country; Leonardo's Ravings; poems: play,—William the Bastard.

making themselves the heroes of their poems. But they had more pleasure in delineating a painter than a poet, for his profession gave him an opportunity of travelling and meeting with adventures, and, in spite of all his extravagancies, he always remained close to the church, so that he was a very convenient peg upon which the poets might hang all those petty sensibilities, boasts, and ravings, of which they themselves were full.

None of these Coryphæi of romanticism, not even Tieck, became popular with the general public. The chivalrous Friedrich, Baron de la Motte Fouqué[3], a descendant of a celebrated French family which had been exiled during the religious persecutions, a Protestant, a Berliner, and an officer, was the only author who was successful in his treatment of the glittering pictures of the middle ages, and who was for a long time the favourite of the public, because he flattered, by his descriptions, the warlike spirit of the age, —patriotic zeal, as well as military vanity.

The leading idea of the greater proportion of Fouqué's works is the romantic golden basis of the middle ages; and love, faith, and honour, are the chief tints of all his paintings. But he deserts the internal spirit for the external form, for the costume of the middle ages. He cares less for a

[3] Friedrich, Baron de la Motte Fouqué, born at Neu Brandenburg, February 12th, 1777; alive: Undine (English); Magic Ring (English); Alethes of Lindenstein; The Persecuted; poems; The Seasons.

true and profound conception of character, than for an accurate and circumstantial picture of customs and habits. This predilection easily degenerates into childishness. It seduces him to introduce antiquities when describing modern events. He feels pleasure in thinking that he is a descendant of the old chivalrous barons, so that when he is speaking of himself, he affects the ancient chivalry. In this way, all his descriptions of modern noble families and officers have a certain ancient tinge, which reminds us somewhat of Don Quixote. On the other side, however, he introduces much that is modern into his representations of the middle ages. As his officers are would-be knights, his knights have a good deal of the character of modern officers, something fitted for parade, affectation, love of dress, self-complacency, coquetting with their weapons, horses, and dogs. He himself is too much prejudiced in favour of this elegant pedantry, to observe the contrast between it and the chivalry of by-gone ages. In like manner, he is deficient in the tone of ancient gallantry, as well as in the ancient colloquial style. Though his heroes often act in accordance with the customs of the middle ages, yet they never speak so. Their sweet and affected language has nothing in common with the simple, natural, enthusiastic, and manly style of the ancient knights; and the ancient catchwords, expressions, and phrases, which Fouqué takes such pleasure in using, are only a covering without any real contents; they contain as little of the spirit

of the middle ages, as Voss's affected imitations of the classic style do of the spirit of antiquity.

Yet this mannerism is nothing but the excrescence of a poetical power which was originally very noble, a power to which we are indebted for many excellent works. Fouqué's Undine will always remain one of the most lovely creations of German poetry. The little tale, too, called The Mannikin of the Gallows (*Das Galgenmännlein*), is one of the best re-modellings of one of our old popular legends. In his larger novels, dramas, and epic works, we find everywhere traces of masterly description, though the mannerism of the whole offends the reader, and though the work is often very unnatural. In his Magic Ring, he fancied that he must pay express homage to the mixture of all tastes; the various intrigues of the knight Hug von Trautwangen, in all countries, and among all nations, afforded him an opportunity of varying his costumes, as in a book of pictures. Yet no one can for an instant mistake his good intentions. He is one of that class of men, by no means rare in Germany, whose warm enthusiastic minds can touch nothing without enthusiasm, and who are quite in earnest, when they appear to be only pretending.

Tales and popular legends were pretty widely diffused. They became part of the literature for children. They were introduced upon the stage in various forms, both serious and comic. Mahlmann, Apel, and Laun, wrote tales for grown-up readers, which were of importance, inasmuch as they

gave rise to Kind's Freebooter (*Der Freischütz*), which was set to music by Carl Maria von Weber. The Viennese poets of the Leopoldstadt theatre printed their farces. Baüerle wrote a number of them, which possessed much local humour. Raymund[4], ascending into a higher sphere of romanticism, wrote musical plays,—the Alpine King, The Peasant as a Millionaire, The Prodigal,—which are in such lovely, such genuine poetry, that I consider them among the best works of the kind which our stage has ever produced. To this list must be added, Wenzel Müller's cordial and pleasant music. The melancholy soul cannot find a better way of dissipating its sadness, than giving itself up to that laughing belief in fairies, behind the merriment of which is to be seen a deep knowledge of man, and the noblest feelings. What nation possesses a poet like Raymund?

Auerbacher, of München, has by his History of the Seven Swabians, by his short, but very clever treatment of the old Legend of the Wandering Jew (*Sage vom ewigen Juden*), and by several tales and stories in his Books for the People, gained a great and eminent distinction. If Hebel be superior to him as a versifier, Auerbacher's popular prose is not a whit inferior to his Treasure Casket; nay, the style of the Seven Swabians is insurpassable.

Much has been done to advance legendary poetry (*Sagen-poesie*), by the collections of ancient, and the translation of foreign legends. Thus the

[4] Ferdinand Raymund, alive in Wien.

indefatigable Grimm, who can never be sufficiently praised, collected the German domestic tales (*Hausmährchen*), the Irish fairy tales, and Swedish romances; Büsching likewise collected a great quantity of German legends; Schreiber[5] those of the Rhine; Massmann those of Bavaria; Schuster those of the Harz mountains; Bechstein[6] those of Thüringia; Minsberg those of Upper Silesia; Ziska those of Bohemia; Mednyanzsky those of Hungaria; Talvj and Gerhard those of Servia; and Wenzig those of Sclavonia. Within these few years there have appeared (both anonymous) Popular Ballads of the Poles, and Russian Tales. Diez wrote a large work on the Troubadours; Habicht edited the Tales of the Thousand and One Nights[7].

Since the Restoration the public has again taken a disgust at romanticism. Fouqué has ceased writing. New romanticists come now and then timidly forward, who sometimes edite a popular tale; but, from respect for the spirit of the age, no one has ventured to penetrate into the holy sanctuary of romanticism, into its catholic element. Romanticism has been divided into patriotism, the craving after wonders, the

[5] A. Schreiber: Legends of the Rhine and the Black Forest; Guide-book for the Rhine; poems and tales.

[6] Ludwig Bechstein, born November 24th, 1801; alive; Meiningen librarian: poetry; Legends of Thuringia; tales and novels; Harmon's Children; Dance of Death.

[7] The authors mentioned in this page are almost all alive. I have not been able to meet with their names in any of the works I have consulted.

love of outlandish things, and the medley of tastes, as well as of the historical novels; species which we shall therefore examine more closely.

We mean to allude to but a very few poets, those who have devoted particular attention to legendary poetry.

Gustav Schwab[8] has, next to Uhland, (whom I prefer considering as one of the Patriotic and Political poets,) unfolded the romantic ballad in that original simplicity in which it is seen in the Boy's Wonder-horn as a genuine old German ballad, in a manner which has not been done by Bürger, by Stolberg, or even by Schiller, who all laid too much weight upon their subjectivity, and which Goethe alone has attempted in his imitations of the ancient popular ballads. I am far, however, from agreeing with Kannegiesser in thinking that Goethe has, everything considered, improved the popular ballads; for he has, on the contrary, often introduced frivolous or sentimental ideas, which are highly refined and modern, and which the people, with whom these ballads originated, could not by any possibility have imagined.

Egon Ebert[9] has devoted the greater part of his attention to the tales of Bohemia, his native country. His most celebrated poem, Wlasta, which is a legend of the Bohemian Wars of the

[8] Gustav Schwab, born at Stuttgart, June 19th, 1792; alive there: poems; Legend of the Three Kings of Cöln.

[9] Karl Egon Ebert, born at Prague, June 5th, 1801; alive there: poems; Wlasta, a chivalrous poem; Czestmir; The Cloister, an idyllic tale; Preteslaw and Jutla

Maidens, composed in the measure of the Niebelungen, shows, in a remarkable manner, how little the sentimentality of modern times is suited for that old and savage age. The talented poet has been so far led astray by a superabundance of tender feelings, as to change the terrible Amazon of the Bohemian woods into a weeping heroine of romance. The hard virgin heart of the middle ages had to be softened by modern tears. How in all the world did that Bohemian Brunehild, that Titaness of romance, happen to become sentimental, because her poet happens to be sentimental? Far from comprehending the wild natural power, the terrible chastity, the heroic courage of a true Amazon, a genuine Diana, he makes the good Wlasta, with all her fights and murders, feel as tenderly and love as sentimentally as a Sappho! No innate savage nature, no neglected love, is the cause of the war which she wages upon men. The poor thing wishes to be avenged on the whole sex, because one has despised her. But she never gives herself wholly up to the mad pleasure of revenge; no, she is always moved anew, and her sensitive soul betrays itself on every occasion. In this way the poet turns a charming, piquant, and rare character, into a repulsive mixture of old barbarism and modern romantic virtue; thus he, with the best intentions, abuses a subject, the like of which cannot be found within the bounds of romantic poetry! A beautiful, but barbarous Diana, filled with strength and courage, cold in her disposition, even more unacquainted with love than hostile to

men, without feeling, heroic, rash, adventurous, filled with womanish whims of the most grotesque kind,—a Wlasta like this was to be painted, a Wlasta like this no one has yet painted. If the poet wished to exhibit love, it was right to show it to the men who endeavoured to tame that charming maiden.

Seeing that the poet was determined, at all hazards, to ennoble his heroine, in the modern sense of the word, he thought it also necessary to lay the burden of the greater part of the cruelties with which she is charged in the old legends, on the shoulders of her companions, and of an old, ugly, and dwarfish witch. This reminds us too fatally of Der Freischütz, and Hauff's Lichtenstein. The good child laid all the blame upon the poor Caspar, in order to favour the escape of his dear Max. The good Hauff laid all the weight of the vices of the duke Ulrich upon the poor fawning chancellor, in order to load the former with all the virtues of his posterity. But neither history nor tradition should be distorted in this way. It is not only untrue; it is unpoetical. Even without doing so, there are but few original characters. Why should we distort and disfigure these few?

The error with which I here find fault is very common among the poets of our own age; and the circumstance of its never being looked upon as a fault, but as a virtue, proves how much our taste is weakened. Almost all the heroes and heroines of our novels, tragedies, and epic poems, are too moral, as well as too weak-hearted. Even

the most savage characters of the old tales, or of the age of club-law (*Faust-recht*), are described as acting upon the principles of our modern humanity; their mouths are filled with dry moral phrases, and their souls with cowardly emotions. Nay, we have even seen Müllner much applauded for having caused a most degraded and cowardly criminal to show off with a twaddle about virtue and feeling. In this way every hero of poetry receives a uniform, which distinguishes him from, but does not render him less ridiculous than, the heroes of our ancient poetry. Virtue, because it is the most exalted and the rarest quality, becomes ridiculous when it is made common, and when it is laid inch-deep, like rouge, upon every one indiscriminately. But this rouge conceals the true physiognomy of the hero. The true nature of a passion, of a rude, savage, and evil character, will naturally be falsified, when the poet is always endeavouring to soften the traits by mixing up nobility and sentimentality, or by inventing motives which seem to justify the crime. Why do not men remain true to nature? Why do they not venture to become horrible? Why do they not delineate characters as they meet with them in real life, and in those old tales, which, with all their grotesqueness, give a picture true to nature, the simple and short style of which is the original language of men? Look into history; look into the old poets. What an abundance of terrible, yet beautiful characters, whose frightful look is softened by nothing but by their beauty,—a beauty which consists in that genuine, unmitigated

terribleness! How true is the evil; how natural the crime! What need is there of sillier external motives to harden a heart, to nerve an arm for crime? The natural qualities of men are more powerful, and more original, than any external incitement. Bad characters are born so. How pedantic, weak, and untrue, is the idea of our modern poets, that man is naturally good, and not only good, but also sentimental! The worst feature of the matter is, that these poets lie; that they know their business better, and that their only object in ennobling their heroes, is to exhibit their own noble sentiments.

The poem should be moral, not the hero; the reader should be affected, not the hero. The whole rule is expressed in these two positions. The old poets followed them, the new have reversed them. The old poets have described bold, terrible, and desperate characters, such as the whim and exulting power of nature had from time to time produced, yet their poems are not, on that account, immoral. The modern poets seldom describe anything but virtuous heroes, though they never put altogether out of sight the rascals; yet their poems are often immoral on account of their weakly affectation of virtue, and their palliation of vice. The old poets wrote coldly and sternly; they put no sweet phrases in the mouths of their heroes; they never allowed him to reason in long sentimental soliloquies;—and yet they affect us. The modern poets write warmly and softly; they always represent their heroes as moved or excited; they always cause them to tell us about

their feelings;—and yet we readers feel, in general, less emotion the more the hero and the poet do.

Duller[1], who is likewise a very talented romanticist, has fallen into an extreme of another kind, into what Jean Paul called *nihilism;* into empty imaginings, the romantic and humorous play of allegories in which everything real is explained, though no new poetical reality has yet been formed out of the chaos of transition. Night, in which are the stormy winds, the driving clouds, the black folded mantle, the dark mysterious figures;—in fine, foolish restless ghosts, figures which have scarcely begun to interest us, when they tell us that we must not rely upon them, that they are not real, that they are mere allegories, the feverish dreams of the poet with whom they have originated, and then they hurry away; they are very sorry that they can't stay any longer with us, but they can't help it, for the wind is already forcing them away and away. They leave nothing behind but a waste and desert feeling. They have excited us without giving us any satisfaction, without letting us know what they really wanted. In their caricatures we may, it is true, see that the majority of them want to frighten us, while the others wish to extort from us a convulsive smile; but this very superabundance of folly renders it of none effect. Would that our

[1] Edward Duller, born at Wien, November 8th, 1809; alive: poems; Poems to Kings and People; novels,—Franz von Sukinger; Berthold Schwarz; Freind Hain; tales and fantasy-pieces; Loyola.

poets would imitate the homöopaths, and learn that a little, a very little seriousness has far more effect in terrifying men than all the tricks of a legion of devils! Would that they would but once in their lives read Edmund Burke's work On the Sublime, (a book now too much neglected,) in order to be convinced that the frown of Jupiter Olympus is more terrible than the wolf's cave in Der Freischütz, and that the most sublime and most terrible, as well as the most charming and beautiful objects, are more closely connected with rest than with storm! Duller seems to have been persuaded of this, for of late he has turned to the historical novel, where we see how the fantastic hunting after pictures flies from his mind, in order to disclose a beautiful, cheerful, and stable landscape.

Julius Mosen[2] has likewise devoted himself, in Venlot, to this play of allegories, and has of late years turned to the historical tragedy. He is always very talented, and always shows a rare depth and beauty of mind. His best poem is his legend of the Knight Wahn, treated in an epic form; a work which I, without hesitation, rank among the best in our poetical literature.

Möricke, who, in his Painter Nolten, showed a vivid imagination, has of late shown a talent for writing tales, to which I think we shall yet be indebted for many beauties.

Wilhelm Müller and Karl Mayer are particularly distinguished in the department of romantic landscape painting. The former wrote very plea-

[2] Julius Mosen: Ahasuerus; Cola Rienzi; Ritter Wahn.

sant ballads for millers, hunters, and travellers, in the background of all of which there is seen the freshness and greenness of uncontaminated nature. The latter chose a form almost completely epigrammatic, so as to give us the richest pictures in the shortest expression; and thus he often paints a landscape in four, or even two lines. They are dew-drops, which, in their little bulk, show us both heaven and earth. The Swiss poet Tanner is less fruitful; and Hess, of the Black Forest, has written a few poems, which, however, contain very tender pictures of country life.

PATRIOTIC AND POLITICAL POETRY.

THERE arose, in addition to the poetry impregnated with the illusions of the middle ages, another, which immediately became connected with the politics of the day. It bore a considerable affinity to the romantic poetry, unfolding, however, its patriotic element alone; it was also most decidedly opposed to that catholic tendency, serving rather the modern liberalism, and, though commonly with a reservation against the interests of France, the spirit of liberty which arose in consequence of the French Revolution. Thus romanticism and liberalism are often found united in one and the same poet.

This was all very natural, and may all be explained from the strange revolutions of the age. A crowd of romanticists, old Germans, who had by the term liberty, meant at first only the *exter-*

nal liberation of Germany from the French yoke, afterwards came to look upon the word as comprehending the *internal* liberty of the people, thus passing over to the constitutional opposition. But the more this was repressed, the more everything tended to render Germanism ridiculous, so much the easier were the old friends of the French Revolution, the new friends of French liberalism, infected with their sympathies; and thus were formed two bands of political poets,—the patriots of 1813, and the mockers of the period of the Restoration.

The patriots were, in their turn, divided into two parties,—the one consisting of those who thought more of the reminiscences connected with the by-gone ages of Germany, of national feelings, of the status gained by romanticism;—the other, of those who thought more of the universal ideals of liberty and human dignity,—those who thought like Schiller.

We shall, however, speak of those chronologically.

The memory of the poets of 1813 will ever be cherished among us. Theodore Körner[3], who, burning with a holy zeal, met the balls of the enemy and died for his country, was the first and best of those who sang of wars and fights. In this youthful poet the people saw the model of its

[3] Theodore Körner, born September 23rd, 1791; slain in battle, August 26th, 1813: patriotic poems,—(The Lyre and Sword;) plays,—Zring, Rosamond, &c. See life and poems by Richardson.

youth—a rich promise. Men thought him fortunate in not having become old, in dying in the bloom of youth, before young hope became pale and withered. In addition to his noble war-songs he has written tragedies, which bear testimony to that patriotic glow and noble purity of soul with which he was animated; in their form, however, they are rather too slavish imitations of the style of Schiller. His little comedies can here be mentioned only as secondary affairs.

The noble Collin[4] had already in the same place, Wien, and by the same means, political tragedies, assisted in rousing up men's minds against the sway of Napoleon. His matter was, either from inclination or from prudence, borrowed from the ancients.

The Prussians did not remain behind these patriotic Austrians. The *Tugend-bund* laboured in quiet, so that when the hour came they fell upon the enemy with a fierce pleasure, like that felt by the ancient Baresarks[5] of the north, thus hoping to revenge, with terrible and crushing blows, the longest and deepest disgrace ever inflicted upon them; then the general jubilee of revenge also found its minstrels. The trumpets crashed a loud laugh, as if for the dance. Every song breathed of pleasure and triumphant joy.

[4] Heinrich Jos., Edler von Collin, born at Wien, December 26th, 1772; died July 28th, 1816: tragedies,—Regulus, Coriolanus, Polyrene, &c.; poems.

[5] See Taylor's Survey, vol. i. p. 32, &c.

Arndt[6], who was also in the habit of writing in journals, was at that time the most popular poet, for he understood best how to hit the popular tone; not merely to rouse up the great and noble feelings of the educated, but also to urge on the common man with simple yet inciting language. Then hundreds of thousands sang:—

Why soundeth the trumpet? Hussars, to the fray!
The field-marshal sweeps through the flying array;
His charger he reins with so gallant a hand,
And swings he so sharply his far-gleaming brand.

His oath hath he kept. When the battle-cry rung,
Ho! the silver-haired youth to his war-saddle sprung!
And there hath he been who, with terrible wheel,
Hath swept the land clean with his besom of steel.

By Lützen's broad mead he so raged in the fight,
That the foemen in thousands grew stiff with affright;
That with speed of the coward in thousands they fled,
And thousands more sank in their last dreamless bed.

By the stream, too, at Katzbach his mettle he tried,
And taught you, ye Frenchmen, to swim down the tide;
Good voyage be yours to the Baltic's wild waves,
Ye poor *sansculottes!* and the whales be your graves.

At Wartburg how nobly he fought in the field!
Neither bulwarks nor towers there the Frenchmen could shield;
Like hares o'er the plain they'd to scamper away,
While the hero pursued them with flying hurrah!

[6] Ernst Moritz Arndt, born at Rugia in Pomerania, 1769; alive in Bonn: The Spirit of the Age; patriotic songs; Travels in many European Countries.

On Leipzig's wide plain, O the fair honour-fight!
He shivered the fortune of Gaul and her might;
There stretched in their last dreadful fall did they bleed,
And old Blücher was a field-marshal indeed.

The battle songs composed by Follen[7], were of a still wilder character:—

By the Katzbach, by the Katzbach, ha! there was a merry dancing,
When ye silly French went whirling round, and kept up such a prancing;
While a good old master played the bass in quick and merry game, sirs,
Marshal Forwards, prince of Wahlstadt, Gebhard Blücher is his name, sirs.
Up! the dancing-hall is lightened with his cannon blazing brightly!
Be stretched, ye carpets green, which in the dance he moistens rightly!
When once his fiddle-bow is waxed with Goldberg and with Jauer[8];
Ha! he hath ta'en the field, his tune, the pelting northern shower.
Ha! the dance went not discreetly on, but all were madly scattered,
As when by a loud roaring blast the windmill's arms are shattered.

[7] August or Adolf Ludwig Follen, born at Darmstadt, Jan. 21st, 1794; alive in Switzerland: poems,—Free Voices of Bold Youth; Gallery of German Poetry.

[8] Goldberg and Jauer, two fortresses in Silesia, were occupied by Blücher a few days before the battle of Katzbach, being the first fruits of the campaign.

Yet the old man wished politely, that they danced and had their pleasure,
For with clubs and heavy muskets[9], he could beat the German measure.
But, near the aged chief, who wakes the kettle-drum's loud clamour,
And with a giant's power doth wield the heavy thunder-hammer?
'Tis Gneisenau, the gallant knight! Those who envy us, or dare
To blame our sons, are shattered by that living eagle pair.
As he scratches out the finish-dance, poor Frenchmen, tender girls!
A dance of skulls and bones around the old musician whirls;
But when ye were so heated in that hell-hot air of slaughter,
That ye sweat your blood and brains, he cooled you in the Katzbach's water;
From the Katzbach, horror-struck, then ye heard the old saw shouted,
"Wanton youths, and venal fools must with heavy clubs be knouted."

By these songs we may even now obtain a pretty correct idea of the wild and savage plea-

[9] The battle of the Katzbach was fought on the 26th of August, 1803. The weather at that time was so wet that few of the muskets would go off. Tired at last of attempting to fire them, they clubbed them, exclaiming in their *Platt Deutsch* dialect, *dat fluscht better* (that does better). The present king of Sweden, then a Prussian general, was so amused with the expression, that, when cheering his soldiers on, he was wont to exclaim, *Flouchez donc.*

sure of the *furor teutonicus* of those days of bloodshed and victory. Among the finest songs of that time must be ranked those of Max von Schenkendorf[1], who died in consequence of his surviving the era of the disenchantment. Witness his swan-song:

A poison saps our inner life,
With a secret, slow decay;
While the word and pen of Freedom
Shall be ta'en too soon away.

The spirit of the people, raised
In the time of need to save,
Forgotten, quenched, and overborne,
Where sleeps it? In the grave?

Friedrich Rueckert[2], who, under the name of Freymund Reinmar, sung sonnets of war, and bold spirit-stirring songs in behalf of fight and freedom, was one of the most powerful poets of that age.

[1] Friedrich Gottfried Max von Schenkendorf, born at Tilsit, December 11th, 1784: poems; poetical remains.

[2] Friedrich Rueckert, born at Schweinfurt, 1789; alive: German poems; Geharnischte Sonette; Napoleon, a comedy; Oestliche Rosen; Nala and Damayanti, an Indian story; Rostern and Suhrab; Seven Books of Eastern Tales; Metamorphosis of Abu Seid; Wisdom of the Brahmins.

"Rueckert is almost the only poet who successfully continues to cultivate the province of didactic poetry. His imagination lives among palms, in the sands of the desert; full of the deepest wisdom; sometimes reflecting and clothing its thoughts in verse, sometimes mounted upon the fiery charger of creation, breaking through all thought."—Conv. Lex. d. Geg.

Three days and three nights,
The Leipzig fair went on right well,
When goods were measured with an iron ell,
And the whole reckoning was put to rights.

Till the third morning broke,
The Leipzig catching of the larks did last;
A hundred were taken at every cast,
A thousand at every stroke.

Yet he does not merely rejoice, he expresses his deep sorrow for the disgrace which preceded the victory. His lamentations are pitched in a key even more sublime than his songs of triumph.

Ha! Smith, what forgest thou? "We're forging chains!"
These chains, alas! yourselves are doom'd to wear.
Peasant, what ploughest thou? "Fields that harvests bear!"
Yes, grain to the foe; the burdock for thy pains.

What shoot'st thou, Huntsman? "The fat deer to hit!"
Thyself must quickly crown the hunter's spoils.
What knitt'st thou, Fisher? "Nets for fish I knit!"
Ah, how shalt thou escape the deadly toils?

What nursest thou, sad Mother? "Boys, I nurse!"
Yes, but to wound, when men, their Fatherland,
Rank'd in the service of the enemy.
Poet, what writest thou? "In glowing verse
Myself and brethren with disgrace I brand,
Who dare not will their freedom, and be free."

I blame not strangers, who, in hostile rage,
Would pierce our bosoms with their foreign steel;
Our open foes they are; and if they wage
A deadly strife with us, as foes they feel.

But what seek ye upon the warlike field?
How hope ye to obtain the gems of fame?
Ye mongrel enemies, the sword who wield,
Not for your country, but your country's shame.

Franconians! Swabians! and Bavarians!
Ye slaves of foreigners! ye silly cravens!
What earn you for your servitude's base wages?
Your eagle may, perhaps, with glory glance;
But you, his robber followers, ye ravens!
Must win the scorn of all succeeding ages.

At an after period, Rueckert hung the sword upon the wall, and resolved to enjoy the peace which had been won; thus, in his garden, among the flowers, and in every bud, he found the subject of a new song. Thus the flowers and songs increased without end, and the poet went on dreaming a path of flowers, till at last he came into a wonderful land, filled with a strange and ever increasing vegetation, and again into another, till Persia, India, and China, strewed at his feet their thousands of variegated flowers, and his pen, like that of Simurg, is never weary in describing to us the lovely objects which he meets with.

Whether should we consider as happier; the poet who, like Goethe, writes nothing without consideration and cool reflection, or him who, like Friedrich Rueckert, goes where his fancy leads

him? Nature wished both kinds, therefore she has permitted both. Those works which are called classical, and of which there have in every age been a few, would be impossible, were it not for that secure consciousness of what one does, and the sharp and acute handling of the scourge of criticism; but without this childlike yielding to the first poetical emotion of the mind, that romantic ingenuousness, which involuntarily uncovers to us the deepest and noblest mysteries of the human soul, would also be impossible. Almost every poet belongs to one or other of the species here mentioned, and Shakspere alone, of whom it may be said that he unites in himself in a wonderful manner the good qualities of both, stands on that very account above both.

Rueckert never attempts to confine himself; he gives himself up to the flow of his feelings, thoughts, and images, scattering his flowers indiscriminately in lovely disorder. His rich, luxuriant, and odorous gardens, seem to want nothing but pathways and scissors; the blooming vegetation has covered over everything; but is not that a true picture of the human mind? Can the tropical sun, which shines from the heaven of the poet's breast, coldly illuminate a well-arranged French garden? must it not rather, in a beautiful wilderness, as in a primitive wood of Brazil, waken flower after flower from the dark sleep of dreams on the world-old trees? This style of poetry, which is as old as nature herself, was awakened and fostered first in the Indies and Persia, then

in the Swabian love-time (*Minnezeit*) along with the mental spring of the nations, and it has, of late, though no longer inspired by the peculiar breath of "nature, wild and free," raised up artificial flowers no less gorgeous. In richness of similes and thoughts, Friedrich Rueckert excels all modern poets; nay, the blooming spirit which exists in him transforms the language itself, by means of rhyme, symphony, and alliteration, into an immense forest of flowers. No poet has had the same power over the language as he has. He plays with the greatest difficulties; nay, he often commits the fault of unnecessarily seeking them, in order to have the pleasure of overcoming them.

King Ludwig[3], of Bavaria, also felt, when crown-prince, for the deep degradation of his country; and he expressed his sympathy in songs; which, however, were not published till after he ascended the throne.

The tyrant's power had reached its summit high,
And as the serpent did Laocoon clasp,
So held he Europe in his throttling grasp,
While the whole world seemed 'neath his sword to lie.

Who were not mute, beheld destruction nigh,
The nations wrestled with despair, when lo!
The noble felt new life within them glow,
To quell mankind's disgrace and direst foe.

[3] Ludwig, König von Baiern, born August 25th, 1786; ascended the throne, 1825: poems (three vols.)

Let those who in our hearts first sowed the seed,
Of deeds with victory and glory crowned,
Rejoice, our boundless gratitude their meed.
Let those who German souls to loftier mood
Aroused, and all unshaken rear'd the good,
Be glorified and evermore renowned.

Not less beautiful and true are the following lines:

A mournful silence broods o'er Aspern's plain,
Deathlike repose holds there its silent reign;
No trophy there relates the heroic story,
None in that place so rich in deeds of glory.
To conquer, well the German people know,
Yet by themselves they fall without a blow;
Their ancient sleep soon loads their heavy eyes;
They waken only soon again to sink,
Deeper of Lethe's sluggish stream to drink,
And dream away their dear-bought liberties.

And the classic epigram—

Two-headed eagle! on our banner shown:
Fit sign! for where two heads are found, *the* head is gone.

The royal poet has sung many songs of love and friendship; songs in which we find undoubted proofs of his love for the arts and for Italy, or of his piety.

Freiherr von Wessenberg, though chiefly a didactic and religious poet, ranks high among the patriotic minstrels, for there is visible, in all his productions, an enthusiastic love of his country,

and an endeavour to strengthen his countrymen in their hereditary virtue, and to warn them from foreign vices and seductions. He is a priest, but he is also a true German. When I think of all the sentimental and poisonous mushrooms, who are equally wet,—if any mention the effeminate, womanish, and hypocritical ballad-mongers, who falsify Christianity, who link every weakness, false culture, every fashionable pleasure of the age, the false sensibility of Goethe, to political views,—I cannot do sufficient honour to Wessenberg, who, among so many women, and womanish slaves, stands forward as a man. One of his noblest poems is that wrathful one, composed after seeing the Dying Gladiator, the celebrated statue in the Capitol at Rome.

Who art thou, Fighter? that so nobly diest,
And with each posture thy lithe limbs command,
For the weak Roman's gold thy labour pliest,
Where, with thy blood, life streams upon the sand?
How every eye with tears of joy is winking,
As thy bowed head is slowly, beautifully sinking!

O shame of slavery! to mankind a stain!
Barbarians, up! on the storm's pinions come!
Not unavenged your woods' wild son is slain,
A pastime for the folk of seven-hill'd Rome!
See, he expires! Hear, from each quarter flying,
The cruel shout of joy that for revenge is crying![4]

[4] As these lines must, of course, remind every one of Byron's Dying Gladiator, from which the idea, and even many of the expressions are borrowed, I subjoin the original, to show the

So must every German feel when looking at this statue.

Friedrich August von Stägemann[5], whose classic measure was not very well calculated to gain great popularity, is also distinguished among the patriotic poets. This poet looked upon the struggle for liberty, which was carried on by the Germans against Napoleon, only as a Prussian and an aristocrat; he directed, therefore, the cannons of his fiery zeal against that national convulsion, which, perhaps, manifested some dissatisfaction with the state into which affairs had gradually come. In fine, he sung against the poor Poles, a course of conduct, which, in comparison with the proud

German scholar that the resemblance is not in the translation merely; indeed the translator has avoided the phrases of Byron as far as he possibly could. I do not know in what year they were published, but they are either copied from Byron, or Byron copied from them:

Wer bist du, Fechter! der so zierlich stirbt,
Der mit der Glieder Stellung und Geberde
Um weicher Römer schnödes Gold noch wirbt,
Da mit dem Blut das Leben strömt zur Erde?
Wie lustberauscht jetzt aller Augen blinken
Bei deines Haupts schön abgestuftem Sinken!

O Schmach der Knechtschaft, zu der Menscheit Hohn!
Barbaren, auf! eilt mit des Sturmes Flügel!
Nicht ungerächt sterb eurer Wälder Sohn
Zum Zeitvertreib des Volks der sieben Hügel!
Seht! jetzt erblasst er. Hört von allen Stufen
Unmenschlich jubend laut der Rache rufen!

[5] Friedrich August von Stägemann, born September 7th, 1763: lyric poems; war songs.

exultation exhibited in misfortune, appears like a cruel arrogance in fortune, and is far from being noble.

What strange contrasts in the feelings! Whilst Stägemann rejoices, Chamisso, of whom we shall have more to say afterwards, sings the song of insane sorrow, The Patient in the Madhouse.

Ah Leipzig, Leipzig! soil of sorrow!
For wrongs thou gav'st us infamy;
With Freedom calling "Forwards! Forwards!"
My red blood didst thou drink;—and why?

"Freedom!" cried I, "Forwards! Forwards!
A fool is he who doubts a word!"
And my head was cleft asunder
By the swift descending sword.

Awakened now to painful aching,
My wound is smarting more and more;
And here I lie in chains and darkness,
With savage watchmen at the door.

Among the poets who form the transition from the inspired to the prosaic age, Ludwig Uhland[6], is the most distinguished; for in him we find the noble enthusiasm and varied fancy of former romantic times, as well as the reflecting, practical tendency of modern times; in short, a combination of the good qualities of both ages. This is the

[6] Ludwig Uhland, born at Tubingen, April 26th, 1787; alive in Bonn: poems (11th edit. 1837); On the Mythical Import of the Sagas of Thor; dramas,—Ernst of Swabia; Ludwig of Bavaria.

reason that his double office, as a poet and as a representative[7] of the people, is full of importance, and not merely accidental. The changes of the age itself are pictured therein. The noble and beautiful enthusiasm of the poet does not forbid the clear conduct of the statesman, neither does a fond immersion in the reminiscences of the past ages of romanticism, prevent a participation in the youthful and powerful growth of the present. As there are many, and often strange symptoms of the progress of the disease of our age, so there are also symptoms of the sound healthy disposition, which, in the midst of our sickness, reminds us of the existence of an invincible and preserving power, and, in my opinion, Uhland's simple and honest method of acting and writing is such a symptom.

He has indulged in no chimerical hopes, therefore he never laments with the wildness of despair. Calm and manly, he goes steadily on his own way; well knowing, that sunshine will follow rain, and the mild blue sky the hurricane.

I would once again be breathing,
In a golden faery land;
But a spirit stern is swaying
My harp-instructed hand.

My fäëry now is Freedom,
And the Right my warrior good;
Up! then, Knight, and stoutly combat
The savage Dragon brood!

[7] He was for some time a member of the States of Wurtemberg, but resigned in 1838.

Shall my harp-strings never echo
With an earnest thrilling tone;
Must the region fair of beauty
Be for ever now unknown.

You must drain the noxious marshes,
Yon must clear the thicket dun,
Ere the pious eye, delighted,
Can behold the glorious sun.

This resignation of manliness which works and creates, without ever thinking of its reward, for coming centuries, or if not for them, for eternal Right itself,—this is something, which should inspire us with respect, and which, in its unassuming modesty, gives ever-enduring offence to those cringeing courtiers, who would fain make the questions which concern but their vanity or their interests, the questions of the age.

Ye wise ones thirsting after lore,
Have you ne'er been told before,
That for the Right, the true and good
Have paid a tribute of their blood?

Think ye will Time renew his youth,
And, phœnix-like, arise from death,
Hatching the egg which ye, in sooth,
Have in your wisdom placed beneath.

No blame, no insult, no hateful insinuation can shake the man from his simple and true path of duty.

The overwise may blame thee,
Walking by their own sun's light;
But hold not thou less tamely!
The old-proved simple Right!

Though the heartless cold may jeer thee,
Giving Ardour, Folly's name;
Only cherish more sincerely,
Zeal's pure and noble flame!

Those souls may not endure thee,
Love of Good who never knew;
Yet show thou forth more purely,
The Honest and the True.

Even where there is no mention of such serious subjects, Uhland maintains this noble, innate simplicity. His poems are interpenetrated by it. Simple nature and truth, a want of all affectation, is the striking characteristic of him and his style.

Our lyric poetry fell, after the destruction of the old love-poetry, into a wretched affectation, from which even our best poets were far from being free. Even till the middle of last century, there were affected imitations of the Horatian-Anacreontic love of the country of the French,—next came the imitations of the sublimity of Pindar and of the classic elegy, by Klopstock, Voss, and Matthisson,—then the affectation of frank, honest Germanism, by Gleim, Claudius, and Bürger,—then the didactic, cosmopolitan, and patriotic bombast of the successors of Schiller,—next, the double affectation, partly of the northern thirst for blood, partly of the old catholic en-

thusiasm which existed among the adherents of the school of Schlegel and Tieck, especially Fouqué,—and, lastly, in our own days, the affectation of frivolous irony, which, originating in the didactic poems of Goethe, and the *Zahme Xenien*, reached its poetical culminating point in Heine, and is again sinking among his imitators, as for example, in Immerman. Who can deny that there is affectation in all these works? But we never find any in Uhland. He led back lyric poetry to the natural state, which so advantageously distinguishes our true and old popular ballad from the artificial lyric poetry of the moderns. Goethe, in his imitations of the old ballads and the old romances, Tieck, the two Schlegels, Novalis, Arnim, even Schiller, in some of his romantic ballads, have preceded him in this path; yet, in no modern poet does this simplicity and naturalness so completely and totally prevail as in Uhland.

Misfortune, however, willed that this nature should, in his imitators, be again cleverly transformed into unnaturalness and affectation. We now read in the journals and collections of poems, ballad after ballad, which, attempting to imitate the simplicity of Uhland, fall into a childish babbling. In them necessary words are omitted, in order to give to the style that laconic and broken form which was common among the ancients; the usual position of the worlds is departed from; old French expressions are unnecessarily foisted in; a construction quite unusual is commenced,—the repetition of the *und*, and the *da*, which is so cus-

tomary among the children and the lower classes, is used *usque ad nauseam*, &c.

Uhland must be reverenced principally as a lyric poet. Yet an acquaintance with his dramatic works, Ernst von Schwaben and Ludwig von Bayern, is necessary to complete our acquaintance with his character. In these poems we find friendship and truth among men ennobled.

Next to Uhland, Anastasius Grün [8] occupies the first rank among the lyric poets of the period of the restoration. Austria never possessed a better minstrel. His poems are of that kind which never die; gold refined in the fire, and thrown, as it were, upon the waves, during the silence of night, by an anonymous poet; only, however, like the treasure in the Niebelungen, which shall hereafter greet the clear day. There are but few poets, whose spirit, born in the deepest life of the nation, lends words to its prophetic dreams, and sees clearly into the blackest night of the times. But these few words will always resound, Music of Futurity; which when it is come, will be as sweet as a chord of the past, and will twine an evergreen laurel round the brow of the poet.

The leading idea of these poems may be seen in the following verses:

Giant Austria! before me thou glancest bright and glorious!
A pale white mural crown I see upon thy head victorious;

[8] Anastasius Grün (a pseudonyme), Graf Auersberg, of a noble Austrian family; Walks of a Viennese Poet; Schutt; Nights; The Last Knight; The Travelling Poet.

Thy locks in rich luxuriance on thy shoulders fair descending,
Locks golden as thy harvests ripe, when in thy breezes bending.

A robe of silken verdure decks that gladsome frame of thine,
The Danube is thy silver-zone, thy garland is the vine;
Bright flames thy polished shield, where mounts the lark's and eagle's flight,
To tell the world thy covenant with the day-star and the light.

Shall a misty cloud for ever veil our heaven so blue and fair?
No; another land may bear your laws, which ours will never bear!
Then let your herald trumpet them beneath a clouded sky!
Then send your spies, like prowling hounds, in ambush dark to lie!

Yet while the land is blooming fair, green as spring, and rich in corn,
And her sons are proud and joyful, with the strength of youth upborne,
Her bread you may not poison, nor profane her verdant floor,
Disturb her azure sky, or gall into her wine-cup pour!

After having praised the youthful emperor Max in his Last Knight, he devoted to the present, to its hopes and fears, his best songs in the Walks of a Viennese Poet and in Schutt. In him, however, we find hope not fear preponderat-

ing, and these true songs of youth are pervaded by a joyful hearty tone.

In Gustav Pfizer's poems we find expressed, notwithstanding the reflection which pervades them, the noble unrest of a poetical temperament, dissatisfied with this present prosaic age; sometimes lamenting, sometimes angry that nothing great takes place, and that the world does not return to the time-honoured peace, to the noble rest of past times,—that this is no longer the age for heroes, neither is it for poets, for cheerful art, or for the happiness of love. How different is this proud resignation from the lamentable, nay, even disgraceful attempts of youthful debauchees to satisfy their cravings in the most common-place sensual enjoyment, as the Russian slave does in drunkenness. We take pleasure in reproaching the moral, who oppose such conduct, with a cold unpoetical temperament. Well then, here you have a youth deeply susceptible of all the joys of life, addicted to the noble and beautiful charm of poetical enjoyment, and yet resolved rather to shut up his fire in a rocky breast, than to quench it in the marshes of vulgarity. A noble example. The young are not disposed to be patient; but it is a noble feature in their character, when they, anticipating the maturity of manhood, conquer themselves; provided, however, this is not more unbecoming than the anticipated apathy and shamelessness of the satyr, characteristics which are the very antipodes of the noble German youth, and to which we shall have to return when speaking of the new Gallomania.

Ortlepp[9] is distinguished as a political occasional poet. He never allowed any important event to occur, without dedicating to it an ode, in the full and euphonious tones of which were expressed zeal, and the most enthusiastic patriotism.

The attempts of Henne and Klemm[1] were of a peculiar character. They attempted, as had been done by the new 'Bard' of Klopstock, to re-introduce the dignifying of the old Germanhood. Henne, animated by patriotism, wrote a history of Divico, and of the old Helvetic struggles, with a peculiar reference to the northern mythology, and in an original language, suited to the Swiss dialect. This well-meant attempt was too little needed; nay, it was even too arbitrary and onesided to be successful. Klemm described the old Germans in hexameters,—a style truly unsuitable, since the hexameter is not a German, much less an old-German style; but Klemm published excellent *Tableaux*, using with a great power of imagination the sources from which he drew his information.

In historical dramas and novels we find many patriotic and political appeals,– but they are only appeals. Raupach introduces on the stage almost the whole of the middle ages, but the patriot can see them without feeling any enthusiasm. In the numerous historical novels our poets prefer describing the patriotism of an Italian, a Briton, or a Frenchman, to casting a natural glance on

[9] Ernst Ortlepp; alive: poems,—Osterlied; Pfenyst-lied.

[1] Gottlieb Klemm, born November 11th, 1736; died July 7th, 1808: plays and poems.

their own country; or, passing over the general interests of Germany, they attach it to rank, and to one province or city. On these accounts, I have no hesitation in excluding them from a place in this section.

The honest old Ehrenfried Stöber, of Strassburg, must be mentioned, when speaking of our patriotic poetry. He sided with Pfeffel, Jacobi, and Hebel, whose friend he was; he wrote Alsatian romantic ballads, and tender lyric poems, after the German fashion. Yet with all this, he was an enthusiastic adherent of France, and devoted to his enthusiasm for French liberty many German ballads, in which he always calls France "my Fatherland." This is a trifle, yet it is a deep blot upon our German national pride. It should not be; it should be utterly impossible for a German to desecrate German poetry, by such an abuse of the sacred name 'Fatherland.' We are ashamed, offended, and angry, at such a thing being possible.

Did you receive your German sentiments in Alsatia, that you cheerfully join us in singing in the German language? What folly seized you, that you fancied the very next moment, that you were Frenchmen? You are an ancient portion of our kingdom, shamefully wrested from us. Your country, your fields, your vineyards, your cities, your villages,—are all as completely German, as they are different from the foreign territories which lie beyond you. Ye all speak German; far as you can see your green hills, which separate you from foreigners, you all speak German.

Your cathedral reminds you, by its sacred minarets, of the primitive individual spirit of German art, which foreigners could merely destroy, but which they could neither build nor comprehend. Your Past is German; your Future will again be so. We will pardon the Present, but not the French.

The transition to the political satirists is formed by two distinguished men. G. A. Freiherr von Maltitz [2] is even yet full of Prussian anger at the years of the war; but he directs it at another object,—at the stagnation and retardation of the age, giving it that peculiar satirical clothing, which can so well combine anger with ridicule. Though himself descended of an ancient family, he is far from being aristocratic; nay, his very popular style sometimes falls into vulgar expressions.

His whimsical coarseness, however, makes the greater impression, as it cannot be for a moment doubted that he means honestly with it, that he is really in earnest. The principal subject of this zeal is:—

> It is a dreadful thing to call
> The Germans from their drunkenness,
> But the most terrible thing of all,
> Is their long prosy soberness.

Yet it is strange that men have so seldom comprehended what an immense preponderance this very soberness, this *vis inertiæ*, has, in the course of time, given us Germans over the irri-

[2] G. A. Freiherr von Maltitz: alive; ballads and songs; satires; dramas (4); The Old Student, &c.

table nations around us. The French fear nothing so much as this amazing soberness, this everlasting phlegm, which will in the end inherit the possessions of all those who are intoxicated. Maltitz, though himself a Prussian, does not speak well of Berlin:—

Open for me thy halls,
  King city, proud and gay!
  None of thy sisters may
Boast of such gorgeous walls,
Arrayed by art's adorning hand;
But, alas! thy sand! thy sand!

Ever would I abide
  Fast by thy towers of state,
  Where, on thy pillar'd gate,
A goddess sits in pride,
And looks down on a mighty land,
Alas too! on a map of sand.

What splendid palace domes
  In streets extending all!
  Scenes of the festival!
Nobility's proud homes!
But even from house and palace grand,
Flies what a cloud of dust and sand!

Behold! how proud doth mount
  That fabric in the skies.
  Within its walls there lies
Finance's mighty fount.
But yet, woe to the hapless land!
That mansion, too, is based in sand.

Ye over-arching trees!
Limes[3] of the high arcade!
Beneath your cooling shade,
Shall I enjoy the breeze.
Even there, alas! your foliage green,
Is from the sandy cloud no screen.

Forth to the thicket near!
Where, in the shady scene,
To the eye all is green,
All stillness to the ear;
But there, too, flying—what a land!
From the parade come clouds of sand.

For me, adieu for aye,
Thou sand-girt, charmless town!
Which strewest up and down,
Through the cold-gleaming day,
All o'er the wide and windy land,
In every eye a cloud of sand.

It is very evident that this said sand has fallen into his eyes, so that he can see nothing but sand. I do not look upon that term as meaning the Hegelians, or the Pietists; neither the Königstadt theatre, nor even its poets; neither the Berlin annuals (*Berliner Jahrbücher*), nor the Berlin Weekly Journal (*Wochenblatt*); neither Raupach nor Willibald Alexis; neither the old Wednesday society (*Mittwochsgesellschaft*), nor the yet older Stall-schreiber-street[4] (*Stall-schreiber-*

[3] Unter den Linden (under the Limes), is the name of a beautiful street in Berlin, lined on each side with limes.

[4] About twenty years ago there was in the Stall-schreibergasse, in Berlin, a tavern kept by a man called Wisotzky, in which singing, dancing, &c., were carried on. The artisans,

gasse); neither the white blood of the poets, nor yet the white beer of the tailors; neither the bad puns nor the good intentions; but as that which, in spite of all these, Berlin is, and ever will be,—namely, a splendid city in spite of its sand; a seat of learning in spite of its writers; and a camp of brave men in spite of its boasters.

The Swiss Fröhlich, who, imitating Uhland's simple style, has written some very pretty lyric poems, is particularly distinguished as a fabulist by his excellent political satires, which, relating almost entirely to the troubles and confusion in Switzerland, admit, like everything else in politics, of a more general application. Disteli has drawn some very pretty caricatures which accompany them. The following picture of the age may serve as a specimen:

An acknowledgment of right,
  Once the gentlefolk did yield
  To the shorn ones of the field,
Who, thus by that act of grace,
Chose, their battles all to fight,
One of the long-eared race.

journeymen, workmen, &c., looked upon it as their proper territory, so that students or gentlemen could not go there, except in large bodies, but at the risk of being maltreated. A common cry was *anständige leute heraus*, "out with the gentlemen:" if the *anständige leute* did not immediately obey the order, the *Schemelbeine* (stool-legs) were put in immediate requisition. It may easily be conceived what kind of a meeting it was; it is as easy to see that Menzel has no great respect for the *Mittwochsgesellschaft*, when he places the two side by side.

This champion went to court,
And had all attention shown him,
There the courtier hounds, in sport,
Heaped their bland caresses on him;
Even the lion hath silence broken,
And in whisper something spoken.

Now the man got corn in plenty,
And he liked that life so dainty;
So he grew ready at each call,
And brayed out his "*Ia*[5]" to all.

Men who had lived during the French Revolution still survived, who, having then, in the heyday of youth, been enthusiasts, did not, when grown older, deny their attachment to the French notions about liberty: they therefore made it their business to ridicule partly the wearisome crawling pace which was observed by all the professions in Germany; partly the romantic enthusiasm and folly of those, who, by endeavouring to ameliorate the age by mediæval representations, or by vague theories of philosophy without any experience of life, only made the evil worse.

Even in the midst of the Revolution, during the mournful catastrophe of Rastadt, a pseudonymous writer, Momus, wrote very good satires, called The Princes in Retirement (*Die privatisirenden Fürsten*), The Princesses in Retirement, and several others. He depicted in a laughing strain the lamentable disruption of the empire. Yet why should he not be allowed to laugh?

[5] *Ia*,—Yes.

Those who suffered by the infinite misery of the country were even more ridiculous than despicable. We cannot help laughing, when we think of the brittle benches breaking under the weight of the be-wigged and be-queued representatives of the whilome great German nation; how the petty spiritual and temporal princes crowded in dozens the highways, dropping, in their flight, their crowns, sceptres, and mitres; how Talleyrand sold by auction the German provinces and towns; and princesses and countesses paid with their persons in order to be ridiculed, to pay again in their simplicity and again to be laughed at. Yes! they deserved the hellish laughter raised by the sans-culottes.

But the sorrows of the German nation were too great to be long laughed at. Napoleon injured and disgraced us. To avenge this, *La Belle France* will, one day, be deluged with streams of blood, for no revenge has yet been obtained; the cathedral of Strasburg still bears the French cockade. Our sorrows were so heavy that men could no longer laugh at them. The Rhenish league had, even in its shameful existence, at least a remnant of honourable feeling. It murdered its brethren; but it did not insult them. The satires on Prussia were written by Prussians. Massenbach, Cölln, Julius von Voss, were all Prussians. In the south, Zschokke was the only one who wrote in the pay of Napoleon, and Hebel was vulgar and frivolous enough to ridicule the brave Tyrolese in his Treasure Casket. But I will not penetrate deeper into the chapter of infamy.

Mercenary and hired authors cannot write political satires; this must be done by the opposition. They therefore did not originate in Germany, until the pressure of foreign tyranny and the horrors of war had been surmounted; until a long period of profound peace had formed new parties.

Jassoy, of Frankfort on the Maine, and the excellent historian Lang, of Anspach,—two business-men, who had calmly looked at the progress of the age, and always observed it with a sharp eye,—were the first who ventured to recommence the practice of jesting. The former wrote The World and the Age; the latter The Tour to Hammelburg;—both very witty works, which scourged with an unsparing hand the lies, deceits, weaknesses, and follies, of the present age. They were laughing whilst others, for example, Görres, were still raging. They had hoped for less; therefore they were less deceived, and less disposed to be offended than to make jests. By this course of proceeding they contributed much to bridle the young who had been disposed to be riotous after the Festival of Wartburg[6]. The mockery of the Frankfort advocate and the

[6] The Festival of Wartburg was held on the 18th of October, 1817, to commemorate the tri-centenary of the Reformation, near Eisenach, where Luther had lived for some time. It originated with the Burschschaft of Jena, which invited the members of all the other universities to take part in the proceedings. Many professors came to share in them; among others, Fries, Oken, Kieser, &c.

All assembled in the morning in the market-place of Eisenach, whence they marched in procession to the baronial hall

Hammelburg tourist had more effect than all th laws and regulations of the Diet, in bringing the young to their senses. The consequence of this was, that the opposition, which had hitherto been ultra-German and romantic, now became of a mere prosaic and modern French fashion. The anger of a Görres became unfashionable; the wit of a Jassoy fashionable. The dreams of an empire, of any great system of policy, vanished; and there commenced a petty warfare against local abuses. Men put far more confidence in anger; wit poisoned it altogether. Anger had made only general claims; wit went into detail; and, coming from men of business habits, it imbued the public with an unheard-of taste for the details of state policy. The wits succeeded in effecting what no enthusiastic theorist had done.

of Wartburg, where the proceedings were opened by the whole meeting singing Luther's hymn, *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.* Speeches were then made, a feast was held, toasts were proposed; after which they returned to Eisenach and attended divine service. In the evening a torch procession to Wartenberg was held, where the veteran soldiers were celebrating the anniversary of the battle of Leipzig by a bonfire. Some students proposed to burn some books which were peculiarly obnoxious to them. This was done; and the whole affair thus got a political hue, which seems to have been far from the intention of its originators.

Judicial proceedings were instituted; Oken's Isis was suppressed, and he himself was examined; Fries was accused, but the indictment was not sustained; and the government at last found that the burning of the books was altogether unpremeditated. In consequence, however, of the proceedings of the students here, stricter watch was afterwards kept upon them, and every assembling denounced as punishable.

They taught men to overcome the tedium of such an occupation with mirth and laughter. They are, therefore, authors of importance in history. The key which can explain the great change which took place in the character of German liberalism between 1815 and 1830 is in their hands.

The small witty writings of Friedrich also belong to this chapter, though they made far less impression on the age than those just mentioned.

Seybold, who was formerly editor of the Neckar Gazette, and one of the best writers on public affairs, has written some comic and historical novels. His Patriot is an excellent satire on the changes and mystifications which occur among demagogues. His Kaspar Hauser is a startling picture[7], which has borrowed all its colours from

[7] The story of Kaspar Hauser formerly attracted so much attention in England, that I have much pleasure in subjoining an account of his reported parentage, which has been kindly given me by a friend :—

"As we can suppose our readers acquainted with the general features of Kaspar Hauser's history, we shall only mention here, that he made his first appearance at Nürnberg on the 26th of May, 1828; that a first attempt to take away his life was made during his residence in the above-mentioned city, October 17th, 1829; and that he was finally stabbed at Ansbach, December 14th, 1833, where he died of his wounds the 17th of the same month.

"Since that period, and even before his death, some facts have been discovered regarding Kaspar Hauser's origin, family connections, &c., which will be known probably only to few in this country; we shall, therefore, be excused mentioning them.

"When Kaspar Hauser made his appearance, there was a quarrel existing between the Bavarian and Baden governments,

reality, and is by far the best work that has been written on this political infanticide.

the former claiming certain parts of the Baden territory in consequence of treaties and rights of succession, which it would here be too long to enumerate. As the crime on Kaspar Hauser seemed to have been committed on Bavarian ground; at least, as the unfortunate youth made his appearance there, it was but natural that the Bavarian government should order the very strictest investigation to be made into the affair. The most celebrated criminalist of Germany, Feuerbach, was invested with a commission for that purpose. The result of this investigation seemed not at all doubtful, and it was publicly hinted, and is by all well-informed persons asserted, that it was found Kaspar Hauser was the son of Karl Ludwig Friedrich, grand duke of Baden (born 1786 † 1818), by his wife Stephanie, step-daughter of Napoleon. Of course there could be nothing more opportune for the Bavarian government than a discovery of this kind. Feuerbach was therefore allowed, in a publication of his, *Kaspar Hauser Beispiel eines verbrechens am Seelenleben*, 1832, (Instance of a crime committed against intellectual life,) to hint very broadly at the fact, making an allusion to the Baden coat of arms, which could not be misunderstood by anybody. The greater courts baron, however, being informed of the facts, they prevailed upon the Bavarian government not to proceed further, as immense scandal must have been the consequence of a further investigation of the affair. Feuerbach died of apoplexy in the night of the 29th of May, 1833, having been present the same day, it is said, at a diplomatic dinner.

"To give the reader a glimpse at the great intricacy of the case, we subjoin now a short genealogy of the last three grand dukes of Baden. Grand duke Karl Friedrich died 1811; his son had died on a journey in Sweden, being thrown out of his coach 1801. Karl Friedrich was succeeded by his grandson Karl Ludwig Friedrich, born 1786, who had been married, in 1806, to Stephanie, daughter of Josephine Beauharnais and step-daughter of Napoleon. She had born to her husband two sons, the former of whom, born in 1812, is said to be Kaspar

In consequence of the mocking of politicians being always directed against the reactions and retardations in Germany, the praises of states

Hauser. Both, however, apparently died. Karl Ludwig died 1818, and was succeeded by his uncle William; after whose death in 1830, the succession devolved upon the sons of grand duke Karl Friedrich († 1811), in a morganatic marriage by lady Geyer von Geyersberg, afterwards raised to the rank of countess Hochberg. By the interference of Russia, nearly allied to the house of Baden, Leopold, the eldest of these counts, afterwards margraves of Hochberg, was declared capable of ascending the throne. It is currently reported in Germany, that Leopold and his brother Wilhelm, although apparently sons of grand duke Karl Friedrich, were in reality the children of grand duke William. There are two publications on this subject by Joseph Garnier, a native of the grand duchy of Baden, the one of which published in 1834, the other in 1835, which together with Feuerbach's pamphlet, form the most interesting documents which have appeared in print on Kaspar Hauser's fate.

"In Germany, even, individuals are hinted at, who are said to be deeply concerned in the whole mysterious transaction. Of course we cannot point out names, but we refer the curious reader to an interesting publication by Dr. Scharberg, in Zurich, which treats of the murder committed on a German student of the name of Lessing, who was found murdered on the 5th of November, 1835, in a meadow, near Zurich in Switzerland. Notwithstanding a strict investigation, the perpetrators of this crime have not been found out. In the course of this investigation, certain letters, containing, among other topics, also points relative to the affairs of Kaspar Hauser, from an individual in the grand duchy of Baden, came to light, which raised suspicions against his character."

The note then goes on to make some remarks on earl Stanhope's conduct in the affair, which, to say the least, seems very inexplicable. It is unnecessary, however, to add them.

which were somewhat further advanced, began by degrees to become common. As we had always troubled ourselves more about France than England, this praise was paid principally to the French; so that scarce ten years after the battle of Leipzig, the Gallomania again found its way into Germany. One consequence succeeded another. Patriotism was betrayed; therefore it became wrath: it was punished; therefore it became ludicrous: it made a mock of itself, it sought to forget itself; and, as before this cure, changed itself into love and imitation of things foreign. One man thought only *ubi bene, ibi patria,* amused himself in Paris, entered into all the fashions, follies, and vices of that city, and was happy if any one took him for a true Frenchman, which, however, could happen only among his foolish countrymen. A second (Börne), cursed a nation which could not behave as such, believed only in one universal humanity, and saw in France the defender of this salvation; he hoped that the weapons of France would save the Men of Germany, and became a traitor out of patriotism. A third (Heine), who was characterized by all the bad qualities of the French mind, attempted to introduce them among his countrymen, and, that the new Gallomania might want in nothing, warmed up everything the old possessed, even its old abominations which had flown over the Rhine, —sans-culottism, community of goods, the denial of God, &c.

As this new and important Gallomania is the latest of our literary fashions, we must devote a

particular chapter to its consideration. Let it suffice, that we have here shown how patriotism, which had been repressed, arrived by degrees at that point at which it began to degenerate into this, its contrary extreme.

THE SCHOOL OF CALLOT-HOFFMANN.

The predilection shown for the magical, the terrible, and the nonsensical, is one of the strangest and most original phenomena of our literature. Very different causes have combined to give it, notwithstanding its irregularity, such an importance in our enlightened age, that it can maintain its own place alongside of other species of poetry,—nay, in France, it is become the most fashionable style.

The romantic reaction against modern times, naturally led men back to that superstition with which Goethe merely coquetted, but which Tieck was the first seriously to adopt. This superstition is inseparable from the poetry of the people, from their legend; nay, poetry itself often takes its rise in it.

A second external cause was magnetism,—which really came upon men like a new miracle,—and the belief in spirits thereby occasioned.

Yet all this would not explain the great liking felt by men for this irregularity, had there not already existed in the age itself, in the tendency of men's minds, an internal sympathy for dark and secret magic.

Just in proportion as men became more prosaic and more enlightened, they became more easily terrified by the silliest images of terror. Belief (*Glauben*), when oppressed, always avenges itself by superstition (*Aberglauben*), a fantastic imagination repressed by sound sense. In as far as regards place, we commonly find superstition most prevalent where nature is poorest,—in the north, and the wastes of the south. In regard to time, it is always found in greatest perfection, either when the people have too much or too little sound sense. It made its way into Rome in consequence of over-refinement being called into existence by the immense and undue prominence given to philosophy. As great as was the number of sophists, so great was that of witches and enchanters. This was all very natural. Belief in an eternal love, and the harmony of the world thereby sustained, can alone protect men from fear. If this belief were destroyed, there would necessarily arise, in addition to the pride and courtesy of philosophy, which arrogates to itself the greatest claims, a childish fear, which frightens at the merest trifles. An aspen leaf startles the god of the earth. The inborn belief of men in one good spirit is avenged, when it is oppressed or led astray by the belief in many evil spirits. He who no longer sees a miracle in the universe, but who blunts the feeling for it by the most prosaic common sense, which looks only to its interests, must be teased and terrified by single petty miracles. He, however, who has seen and felt the unsatisfying nature of rational-

ism, of trivial enlightenment and prosaic usefulness, feels a void, and a deeper poetical want, which, just for the sake of contrast or of novelty, will greedily grasp at everything that may afford it any knowledge of the mysterious realm of superstition.

In Hoffmann, however, we see that a great, nay, even desperate hatred of modern things, and of their unpoetical follies, suddenly carried away the poet from, as it were, a rational and courtly society, assembled at tea, and amid the full blaze of a lighted drawing-room, into dark night, amidst the feverish folly of witches, spirits, and devils. Jean Paul's Schoppe[8], suffered from this same despair, but he did not venture to make the same bold spring into the world of spirits, so that his very folly was of a humorous tendency. Yet from this position of Jean Paul, it was but a step to that of Hoffmann.

One cause must yet be added, and that not the least important,—a mysterious love of the horrible, which has insinuated itself into the nineteenth century, whilst the eighteenth preferred sentimental warnings, favours, and reconciliations, and though it did always show much humane magnanimity, yet it always affected it as being fashionable. Succeeding generations have become more savage. The animal part of man having tasted blood in the French Revolution, has never, since that time, ceased to thirst after the forbidden pleasure. Men no longer take pleasure in seeing

[8] A favourite character in J. P's. works.

family incidents or affecting stories represented on the stage; they prefer bloody murders and horrible crimes. Men feed upon grief, and the tortures of the scaffold. In France, this horror is more of a material, in Germany, of a mental character. In Paris, the executioner is brought on the stage, and the criminal is beheaded with such a deceptive similarity that the blood spurts all around. But in Germany, we are even more cruel, for we depict the torments of the mind, the stages of insanity,—the imprisonment and murder of the soul by magnetism, enchantment, and leagues with the devil, &c. The French horror is the more rough; ours the more refined,—but on that very account the more painful.

How happens it that our refined age shows such an inclination? Is it the consequence of over-refinement, of a deadened taste which seeks for new provocatives, of a sated palate which cannot be re-invigorated, but by Cayenne pepper? Do we resemble the Romans, who, in their culture, became at once so refined and so savage, that they had bloody fights, and deadly struggles of wild beasts at their most enervating and luxurious feasts? Or is this horror less old than young? Is it the feverish dream of an impetuous youth, who is oppressed by sloth, yet has an internal longing for action?

I fear that this tendency will prove injurious to coming generations. It, independent of all others, evidently betokens a retrograde movement in man; for it is connected with the rudeness, with the animal part in man, whilst the humanity and sen-

timental mildness of former days served to promote the highest nobleness of soul and the angelic part of man. Even the populace was ennobled by the mildness of the noble spirits of the eighteenth century, and in that era is to be found the origin of much of that magnanimity and noble feeling which distinguished the period of wars and revolutions. But what can we expect from the people, if even the minds of the great and noble run riot in the nineteenth century? It will not be till a later period that men will become aware that that was a bad school, in which men were habituated with the sight of horrors.

The farther back we go, the more innocent and tame do we find this poetical craving after wonders. We find two distinct kinds of this superstitious poetry; the one, which aims at nothing but making men bigoted; the other, calculated to amaze and terrify. Both, however, agree in one point,—in giving out nonsense as sense, and in advancing the interests of the silliest superstition. Both describe wonderful events, caused by dark, unknown, and magical powers, which sport with men as they choose. In the former kind, these dark powers appear mystical,—mysterious bands of supernatural, magical beings, while men or heroes are looked upon as playing the part of scholars, who are to be examined. In the second kind, the dark powers are fate, or even the devil, and men are the sacrifice, the tortures of which must produce the poetical effect.

The former kind was the earlier. It arose among the freemasons, and in consequence of that

craving after wonders, which, during the latter half of last century, sought for mysteries of every kind in secret societies. Curiosity looked upon impossibilities as possibilities, and honest blockheads thought that they would most easily become wise, by becoming members of a secret society. In fine, the vanity of grown-up children carried on their idle game in real societies, or by means of representing them. How was it possible that literature could be uninfluenced by a course of procedure which made so great a sensation in the real world? Was it possible that poetical literature, in particular, could refrain from treating a theme so attractive,—and this, too, when we remember that this craving after wonders had so poetical a tinge? The scenes which Gässner[9], Philadelphia, Wöllner, the Freemasons, the Rosicrucians, and the Illuminati, really enacted, were described in numberless stories of ghosts, wizards, and mysterious associations. Even some distinguished authors showed symptoms of being infected with this mania; half in earnest, half in jest; as for example, Goethe in Wilhelm Meister and the Gross-Cophta, Schiller in the Ghost-seer, and Jean Paul in Titan. This nuisance was also fostered by one of our best German operas—Mozart's Magic Flute (*Zauberflöte*), a work which had a considerable influ-

[9] Gässner, Wöllner, and Philadelphia, were all noted conjurers; small Cagliostros in their way, though they cannot be equalled with him the great master of trickery, impudence, and pocket-emptying.

ence in making men fond of this kind of nonsense. The most distinguished novel writer belonging to this class is Vulpius, whose Rinaldini, which contains the whole apparatus of mystical societies and startling enchantments, became an exceedingly popular book. It was Werner, however, who, after having laboured to exalt this kind of poetry to a tragic dignity, unfolded it in its greatest extent.

Werner[1] endeavoured to attain this high and exalted situation by transforming those magical powers and secret societies, by which the initiated were guided and tried, into real delegates of God, and by subjecting the whole of the creations of wonder to the theological rules of Providence and predestination. This man possessed a poetical, and, in a still higher degree, a passionate fire; but he was perhaps of too dry a disposition, for it cannot be denied that he was a little crazed. In quest of protection from that glow which was consuming his vitals, he threw himself into that sea of grace, where poor sinners like himself commonly lay aside the earthly man and put on the heavenly one. The poet, when in the depths of contrition, remembered, in its whole extent, and consoled himself with, the pious proverb—

[1] Friedrich Ludwig Zacharias Werner, born at Königsberg, November 18th, 1768; died 18th January, 1823: The Sons of the Valley; Consecration of Strength; The Mother of the Maccabees; see Foreign Review, and Carlyle's miscellaneous writings.

The robe of our own righteousness
Is in God's eye but filthiness.

He knew that his own works and virtue were nought; that man involuntarily and blindly fulfils the decree of destiny; that all his deeds and all his sufferings are predestined. His heroes are conducted by the fetters of fate into the lightsome realm of "azure and light," or into the dark one of "night and glow." A secret society takes possession of the guidance of man, so that in this we cannot but see an analogy to the tribunal of the Inquisition. Those "Sons of the Valley," those mysterious Old Men, sometimes form a secret tribunal (*Fehme*);—sometimes an Inquisition, under the direction of one, the holiest and oldest; and this Old Man of the Mountain and Valley, may, like the Grand Inquisitor in Schiller's Don Carlos, say of the hero of the tragedy—

The deeds of his life
Are each and all recorded in
The holy registers of Santa Casa.

The heroes are, from the hour of their birt , destined for what they must do or suffer. One is a favourite child, a born angel, who, after some theatrical juggling, after he has, like Tamino[2], gone through fire and water, will enter the heaven which has long since been destined for him. Fate long plays at hide and seek with them; here

[2] In the *Zauberflöte* (Magic Flute.)

the mysterious valley is hidden from the elect, there the mysterious loved one is concealed, until at last the scales fall from the eyes. The pupil becomes initiated, and the lover finds another half; no matter how far the two are separated from each other, fate brings them together, even though "the North pole should have to bend to the South."

In this way the heroes are deprived of all freedom of action, so that this kind of poetry can never become dignified, notwithstanding all the labour which Werner has expended in endeavouring to render it so. Yet his poems are not deficient in religious depth, and in a certain glow of devotion, especially in lyrical passages, which impart to his works a value which is independent of their scenic effect. Yet he has almost always confined his endeavours to descriptions of the fair side of that fatalism; the only perfect piece in which he depicted the dark side, was his Twenty-fourth of February. Of late years this first species of fatalistic poetry, with its accompaniment of secret societies and magic compacts, which were intended to benefit mankind, has almost entirely passed into oblivion. Men now only laugh at it.

But this very circumstance has rendered the second kind, which represents the same fatalism, (on the dark side, however,) of so much the greater importance. Here the dark magical powers are the secret machinists of the wonderful; sometimes they are represented in a Christian point of view as the Devil, the Tempter, the Destroyer—some-

times in a classic sense, as Nemesis, or as Hecate and the Furies,—sometimes in novels, sometimes in tragedies. Hoffmann was the choragus of the former, Müllner[3] of the latter.

Müllner, treading in Werner's footsteps, drew the fate-tragedy from that frightful caricature in which it had long haunted the German stage. Werner's February gave the first impulse; Müllner's guilt was the culminating point; while others have spread abroad this style in every direction. It is closely connected with that of Werner, which has been already described; with this difference, however, that its fate is always a hostile, revengeful, and destructive power. But it will be necessary to draw a line of distinction between this new and the old fate-tragedy.

In the ancient tragedy, Fate was an iron, inexorable, and truly sublime power; frightful, yet beautiful, and worthy of the idea which we ought to have of an all-ruling destiny. It stood an eternal necessity opposed to heaven-storming liberty; and the measure of its sublimity lay in the power and dignity of the hero. The more free, the more exalted, the more godlike was the hero; the mightier, the deeper, the holier, was the power which enchained him. The struggle of the hero against Fate was the leading idea of the tragedy; and Fate, though in itself unchanging and invincible, receives, by the strength of the opposition

[3] Adolf Müllner, born at Langensdorf, near Weissenfels, Oct. 18th, 1774; died, July 11th, 1830: dramas—The 29th February; Guilt; King Yngurd; The Albanese; The Midnight Journal.

and by the value of its sacrifice, a relative greatness, the only one allowed to it in poetry. In free will, in power, and in the internal worth of the hero, the criterion of the tragedy lay. The greater and worthier the hero was, the more powerful was fate; the more sublime the struggle, the nobler the poetic fiction. The resistance of the hero was the measure of the whole poem. Such was tragedy in the hands of Schiller, and as such it became the favourite poetry of the Germans. And what did it become but a puling craving after originality, and a moral impotence which sought to cradle itself softly upon Schiller's laurels.

The heroes of our modern fate-tragedies are without volition, without worth, without dignity. They are from their very birth in the hand of a dark power. They commit their horrible misdeeds not of their own free will, but because it is predestined. A curse, inherited from a mistress, or inflicted by a gypsy, drives them on, and their sin, as well as its punishment, is inseparably connected by the stars with one unavoidable fatal hour of their life. The poor sinner must sin because this happens to be the Twenty-fourth or the Twenty-ninth of February. He does not sin because he likes it, or because it is his own will; if he have any motive, it is one annexed as a punishment, or transmitted as a curse. Yea! even the devil is not at the trouble of leading him astray, he must sin whenever the clock strikes twelve; the dagger is the hour-hand; and the heart which he is to stab, is the mysterious number,—the hand advances, and the terrible deed is

done. The witch-trials are profound and intellectual, when compared with this meaningless fatalism. In them, man has, notwithstanding all his temptations, a free choice, and the dark powers must labour to obtain him. There is a heroic strife, like that of Sintram against his comrades, or an honourable bargain, like that between Faust and Mephistophiles. But in these fate-plays the hero has neither liberty of choice, nor enjoyment when he has chosen; and even the dark powers themselves have not the satisfaction of combating the strong spirit of man, of vanquishing his heroic power and wisdom; they have not the triumph of gaining a victory; it is merely a meaningless game with puppets. The devil himself must become very *ennuyeux* in playing this game, in which there is nothing to seduce, nothing to overcome by cunning, no holy power to corrupt, no angel to tempt, no office to perform but that of executing subjects who have long been ready for his hands.

Fate itself consequently appears here as much altered as the hero. It, like the hero, has lost its original significancy. It is no longer the holy necessity, the blind power of nature, those eternal limits which confine the hero struggling to overleap them,—it has become a mere sportive caprice. Because it meets with no opposition, it is no longer exalted; it has become trivial, because it sports with puppets. But as it alone acts, and this according to a capricious plan, which it vents in any curse; and as the hero does not act, but passively submits himself to the pleasure of

Fate, Fate therefore has itself really become the hero itself. We feel interested only for the actions of fate, for those sly, cunning, and terrible tricks which it plays men. The poet must, therefore, endeavour to render his tragedy effective, not by the character of the hero, but by the character of the Fate. The effect which cannot be attained by the innate dignity and worth of the hero, must be attained by the artful construction of the plot, by the strangeness and horror of the Fate. Fate has nothing to do, but to play like the cat with the captive mouse, and at last to kill it. This, to be pleasing, must be done in a circumstantial manner, and with all possible accompaniments of horror. The more tricks it plays with its victim, the longer it conceals from the poor little mouse its fatal claws, the more artfully the advances are made, until at length the poor unfortunate wretch makes the fatal spring into the open mouth,—the more effective is the whole game. The poets, therefore, do not strive to render the tragic heroes great or dignified; they rather endeavour to protract their execution in a way as ingenious and tormenting as possible.

They, therefore, do not choose their heroes out of Plutarch, but out of the criminal records, which are placed in the calendar as a warning to the citizen and peasant. Daggers, poison, suicide, and incest, are, as it were, the daily bread of these heroes; and the poets are only at a loss how to make them horrible enough, and thus to give the game of fate, some of the charm of novelty. It is a great pity that the province of tragical

fate begins at the very point at which criminal justice ceases. Justice must have nothing to do with the poet, nor the poet with justice. If the poet put to death a common criminal who commits a murder, it is just as bad as if justice were to try him by æsthetics, in place of by the *Corpus Juris*. But they who look upon the scaffold as a theatre, will be ready enough to change the theatre into a scaffold.

Though this desecration of the muse of tragedy is improper, nay, even disgraceful, yet its originators have been much applauded—partly, because the public is always savage and blood-thirsty enough to batten on those savage deeds,—partly, because the most favourite pieces of this kind are really studded with beautiful verses, sentences, phrases and sentiments. But the abuse of the forms of poetry can never be excused; and just the more beautiful the forms are, the more repulsive is it, to see them decked out with contents so unworthy. Though these poets take great pains to deliver the most common-place ideas in high-sounding pathetic words, and to stamp the worthless criminal or mere puppet of fate in bravadoing soliloquies as a true hero, yet their vulgarity always breaks through all their phrases, so that we can with justice apply to them the words used by Plato; "We must not allow ourselves to be persuaded that a god has done such frightful and godless things, as lying poets tell of him. We must rather try to exhort the poets, either not to tell these actions of the heroes, or not to give them as sons of the gods."

Yet there is one thing which I think worthy of notice connected with these fate-tragedies. They are unnatural, artificial, and affected, even from their very commencement. They do not originate in a longing pressure of the mind, but in a calculation of the intellect, which wishes to produce something new and extraordinary. The poet works for effect, for the ephemeral fame, for the praise of the critics. Thence arises that self-reviewing already so common. Heroes reflect, even when in the theatre, in well-arranged verses on their tragical significancy and originality. This custom became perfectly intolerable in Müllner, for he explained the whole art of criticism in his tragedies [4].

He had many imitators. The first was Grillparzer [5], whose Ancestress (*Ahnfrau*), who haunts as a ghost, till her guilt is washed away by the destruction of her name, was a complete imitation of Müllner, both in its tendency and in its Spanish trochaics. Yet it, like the Guilt (*Schuld*) of Müllner was very successful on the German stage. Grillparzer has again given up this tasteless mannerism, and turned to historical tragedy, in treating which he imitates the style and tendency of Schiller. Müllner was also imitated by Houwald [6],—not to speak of many others, though

[4] See Müllner's Life and Character by Schütz, who tells that Müllner was in the habit of writing fulsome encomiastic criticisms on his own works.

[5] Franz Grillparzer, born at Wien, 1790; alive there; Die Ahnfrau; Sappho; The Golden Fleece; Life a Dream.

[6] Christian Ernst Freiherr von Houwald, born November

about nine or ten years ago, while they were fashionable, I reviewed them at great length in my *Literaturblatt*. This nonsense is even now, thank heaven, become unfashionable. One of the most ridiculous fate-tragedies was the 'Fourteenth' by Mörtl, in which Fate always announced its blows by the hunter shooting a stag of fourteen tines.

The school headed by Hoffmann[7], and which is, for distinction's sake, called that of Callot-Hoffmann, because his grotesque figures seemed to remind us of the style of the fantastic painter Callot, is of far more importance than that founded by Werner and Müllner. This school has spread principally in France.

Hoffmann does not, like Werner and Müllner, play merely with effects, and reckon them up in a mathematical manner. There is something in his nature which compels us to think that he is quite in earnest about the matter, that the fear of the kingdom of spirits had really come over him, and that the hand of a demon had, at some period, touched his glowing forehead. His feelings spring from a depth, his dreams from a night, which has for its background no idle game, no

29th, 1778; alive, syndic of Lusatia: dramas,—The Prince and the Citizen; The Enemies; The Robber; Das Beld.

[7] Ernst Theodore Asmodeus Hoffmann, born at Königsberg, January 24th, 1776; died at Berlin, July 24th, 1822: Fantasy Pieces, in Callot's style; Night Pieces; Serapionsbrüder; Princess Brambilla; Master Flea; Lebens-Ansichten des Katers Murr; Doppelgänger; The Devil's Elixir. See Foreign Quarterly Review, vol. i. and Carlyle's Specimens.

hunting after effect. Here we find expressed a genuine sickness, a true sorrow, a despair in which is something real. There is too much light in our age, therefore the shadows are blacker on the other side.

Hoffmann was not completely without predecessors. Let us, in the first place, treat of these very interesting poets. Heinrich von Kleist[9] was the stepping stone between catholic romanticism and modern magic. His Somnambulist Kate of Heilbronn (*Kathchen von Heilbronn*), and his moon-struck Prince of Homburg, are wonderful creations, which stand half-way between the noblest simplicity and true-heartedness of the middle ages and the utmost refinement of modern times. These poems, though of inimitable loveliness, and as perfect and as transparent as those of Homer or Shakspere, contain among the flowers a serpent of modern times, which, causing a secret shudder, gives us to understand why this amiable poet became a suicide. He who feels the mysterious power of sympathy, knows its invisible band. Here this feeling is despair and death. This is the veil of Isis which no one is allowed to lift. Enticed by the harmonious sounds of another world to the throne of the most beautiful

[9] Heinrich von Kleist, born at Frankfort on the Oder, October 10th, 1777; committed suicide November 21st, 1816; Family Schroffenstein; Käthchen von Heilbronn; Prinz von Homburg; The Broken Pitcher; Michael Kohlhaas. See Mrs. Austin's Characteristics of Goethe, ii. pp. 105–127: where may be found a translation of Tieck's Biography of Kleist, and some remarks on his works by Mr. Heller.

of beings, to the embrace of the most lovely of existences, to which we are drawn by the cords of a mysterious longing, we are suddenly surprised by a monster which is as inseparable from that lovely existence, as the dragon is from the enchanted princess. In a word, he who has entered too deeply into the sweetness of sympathy, is sure to be crushed to the ground by antipathies. He who has meditated too much on the riddles of love, cannot endure the hatred which exists in the world; he must therefore die.

As we see in Heinrich von Kliest the sweet sorrow of death, so do we perceive in Adalbert von Chamisso[9], the bold humour of despair. In the former, man's independence of the supernatural is shown in an affecting, in the latter in a comic point of view. But, how is it that Chamisso, who has circumnavigated the globe; who, like a Hindoo, lived as the friend of nature amid the deep peace of the fairest world of plants; in the most beautiful, and perhaps the only oasis which exists in the Berlin sea of sand; how, I ask, came he to be the poet of savage folly? Is it the contrast which grants to the softest dispositions the talent of imagining the most terrible stories, as, on the contrary, the wildest drollery of the comedian often proceeds from a deeply melancholy soul?

[9] Ludolf Adalbert von Chamisso, (Louis Charles Adelaide de Chamisso de Beaucourt, of a family which left France at the Revolution), born January 27th, 1781; died August 21st, 1838: poems,—Peter Schlehmiel; Hamaische Spruche; translated Beranger. Accompanied the Russian expedition round the world 1815–18.

And do we not see in the restless wanderer, who, upon seven-league boots, hunts through the world after his own shadow, the picture of this age drawn by the poet with a profound wisdom? Is the poet nothing but the glassy sea, which, the more peaceful it is, mirrors, in a proportionally more beautiful manner, the storm of mists and clouds? I believe so, though I am not personally acquainted with the amiable poet. Peter Schlehmiel is his greatest and best work. It is one of the most classic works of romanticism; it can never be forgotten by any one who has read it, and is, therefore, written for immortality. Even in his minor poems we see in every line the deep-thinking poet, who sees and bewails in the folly of men, at which others only laugh, a secret woe; but who, on the other hand, finds in those terrible things which make others' hair stand on end, those characteristics which make us laugh in spite of ourselves, and confirm us in the strangest of all feelings, namely, that we, when suffering, can laugh even at the cause of our suffering.

In Hoffmann we find the sentimentalism of Kleist and the humour of Chamisso amalgamated together. He became the head of the new magical school,—the poetical Pluto, who swayed the sceptre of the dark kingdom, even in its widest extent. Or was he not rather swayed by it? It is the poetry of fear which impresses upon all his works a stamp so peculiar. This was the reason that the sense of obedience, which is so closely allied to that of fear, was unfolded by him to so high a degree. This was the reason his ears al-

ways heard and responded to those mysterious tones of nature, as well as of art, which fill us with a sweet anxiety, or with terror, as if we felt the vicinity of spirits, or of the thunder of the last judgment. This was the reason that he descended even into the fancies of children, so as again to feel the fright which children feel. And yet after all, we cannot accuse him of any excessive effeminacy or womanish unmanliness, for his masterpieces betoken a sorrow, a despair, a boldness and anguish of thoughts, a feverish glow, which man alone is capable of feeling. It is a disease, an over-tension, folly,—but, withal, it is manly.

The boundless realm of the Ugly, the Repulsive, the Offensive, was all gathered around him, —from the devil down to the silly child's doll; from the false note in life, which rends the soul, down to the false note in music, which merely offends the ear; so that he alternately depicted with inimitable liveliness and truth, those tormenting objects, and the torments which they inflict upon a finely-constituted soul. He himself is that mad musician Kreisler, who, full of sympathy for the purest and holiest notes, is brought to the very verge of despair by the false notes, which maliciously sound in his ears as coming from hell. But it was not in music alone, that he possessed this tender feeling. In every situation of life he met with those hateful hostile stories which correspond to musical dissonance, and those magical powers, which are most calculated to rack the noblest souls.

We cannot properly see what are his most

beautiful characteristics, until we know what the French have made of him. They exhaust themselves in inventing repulsive figures, in order to create for themselves a terrible pleasure, forgetting, however, what Hoffmann never forgot,—to place beauty and nobility of soul amidst these repulsive objects. They imitate his extravagances, his dissonances, but not his beauties; his euphony, of which they are the very antipodes. They rank Hoffmann high as a painter, but not as a musician; yet Hoffmann is filled with music, and his hellish sketches never want the prayer of the holy St. Antony; nor the witch-sabbath, the Easter-bell; nor yet the concert of the devil, the pure thrilling tone with which the virgin soul leaves a crushed and valueless instrument. It is true that he has painted the soul only in this state, but this soul was always beautiful, and always bore heaven in its harmony.

Hoffmann shares with Jean Paul the characteristic of touchiness. I wish it were not so common among men. Yet we should fall into barbarism, were we not from time to time reminded by the poets of its existence. Steel is not merely hard; it is also brittle; and a breath can destroy it. In thousands of men we find the hardness; can we wonder at finding in one the high polish?

We have had plenty of womanish and timorous men. Their despair has often become known in a very petty manner. I mean, that it has often assumed a very æsthetical character in Hoffmann's poetry. Posterity will say that the dissonance,

which pervades our age, was represented by Hoffmann in a more poetical manner than by any other poet; and perhaps the poetical charm consists in his not having, like so many other poets, sought for a political solution of the dissonance, and appealed to futurity, but in his having held fast, without awaking, the illusion of a black o'er-shadowed fancy,—a dream. The flowers which bloom during the night, are more beautiful when we do not think of those which bloom by day. Hoffmann never read a newspaper; he felt an aversion to them, such as an Albino feels to the light. This was not his world. For the same reason, however, the political poets of the French romanticism should not attempt to imitate him. The owl is ridiculous by day; and the moon, which rules the magic night, pales at the crow of the cock.

This dark side of life is far more natural, when spoken of in reference to theology and natural philosophy. In this department Justinus Kerner is the mediator,—the amiable prophet of Weinsperg, whose friendly house, situated amidst the luxuriant tendrils of the vine, near the celebrated old castle, Woman's Truth (*Weibertreue*), has its doors standing wide open to entertain the dead as well as the living. His former connection with the romanticists in Heidelberg, and the active part which he lately took as a magnetizing physician, and which brought him into connection with the celebrated Seherin von Prevorst and the world of spirits, have impressed his literary works with a peculiar stamp. As a poet he is

most closely allied to Uhland, in the sterling and hearty simplicity of genuine lyric poetry; but these direct expressions of the purest and noblest feelings are most wonderfully contrasted with his imagination, which, in the Shades of Travel, sports in the most inexhaustible and varied richness of similes and foolish boldness; while both of these are again a contrast to the pious, nay, even theological bearing of the poet in regard to the Beyond, which he fancies now stands open.

Magic became a favourite even on the stage. In addition to Weber's celebrated Der Freischutz, the Vampyre, the Somnambulist, the Marble Bride, &c., became favourite subjects of operas. Romances and novels soon got hold of the affair, so that for long there did not appear a single annual (*Taschenbuch*) in which there was not a story about magnetism or spirits. Kruse[1] was the principal writer of this description of tales; he also wrote many stories of criminals; his writings, as his tales are commonly founded on fact, possess a psychological value.

THE MIXTURE OF ALL TASTES.

GERMAN poetry, after having successively tried the Gallomania, the Grecomania, and the Anglomania, at last sunk into the illusion of the middle ages; after Herder had treated of the sagas, legends, and forms of the East, and of the most remote nations;

[1] L. Kruse: Tales and Stories of Foreign Lands; Daniel the Stone-cutter; The Crystal Dagger.

while Goethe proved that the German can make himself master of all styles, the most various as well as the most foreign.

After such examples it was natural that many should take pleasure in this manysidedness. Some wished to exercise their talents in more than one way,—as for example, Goethe; others availed themselves of the advantage of choosing amidst so great a variety of styles, sometimes the easiest, sometimes, for originality's sake, the most difficult.

Yet the various styles of our own poets exercised, perhaps, even a greater influence than those of foreign nations, over the great body of the poets who succeeded them. The same poet, in the same collection of poems, imitated not only the Greeks, the French, the English, the Spaniards, the old-German love-singers, the Persians, the Hindoos, and the Chinese, but also Goethe, Schiller, Tieck, Matthisson, &c.

As Goethe was the senior master and unapproachable model of this school of schools, the two Schlegels gave it laws, and a name, and Solger was its philosopher. They deduced all these tastes from the unity of the Beautiful in Art, which, like the golden thread, runs through the history of art, and to which all the poetry of all ages and nations voluntarily attaches itself. This was the cause of their deifying Goethe; this was the cause of their attempts in the Grecian, Spanish, old-German, Hindoo, &c., styles; this was the cause of their system of æsthetical polytheism, which, like the religious polytheism of

the days of Hadrian, adopted all the gods of all nations.

Who can deny that there is manifested in this a true trait of German character,—that universal humanity, that sympathy for everything which concerns mankind; a feeling and a talent which other nations do not possess in so high a degree. But we have gone so far in the path of enthusiasm, nay, I may say craving, for laying up and enjoying, for a poetical victory over the world, that we are at last surfeited. German individuality has been too much weighed down by the burden of foreign individualities. We are not yet become moderate; we have not found out proper limits. I have attempted to show this in the beginning of this work, where I showed the distinction between receiving and returning,—translations and imitations. Though, becoming acquainted with what is foreign, we love its beauties, and adopt as many of them as we can, yet it does not follow as a matter of course, that we should slavishly imitate everything foreign; that in regarding it, we should forget, or give a false view of our own individuality; or, worse than all, that we should falsify even the foreign original by our paltry imitation. Yet this has often been done; nay, it is still often done.

This same school of the Schlegels elevated to the rank of a law the principle of Goethe,—that everything depends upon the external form,—that the aim of the poet ought to be to give the highest polish to his poems. This opinion gave rise to a familiarity with foreign rhythms, a musical

coquetry in solving difficulties of words, &c.; a prose style, vexatiously correct, and an elegance of pen, which, with Varnhagen von Ense, became literally elegance of writing.

The third and most characteristic peculiarity of this elegant school is its affectation (*Vornehmthuerei*). Goethe possessed many friends, nay, we may even say a nation, before he had a household. The two Schlegels were the first who built for him an ante-chamber, in which they might show themselves off as the chamberlains, to introduce others, carrying the key of the poetical heaven with much politeness on their back. They soon found plenty of imitators. The necessity of being servile has always been united with that of being courtly. To give themselves up body and soul to Goethe; to look upon his every breath as an oracle delivered by God; to boast stupidly, and to laugh aristocratically at the uninitiated, who had not such fine noses;—such things were nothing but a repetition, in the province of letters, of what had been hundreds of times done in that of politics. They were servants, who dressed elegantly, and behaved in a boasting, arrogant, and affected manner.

Among the poets, Ernst Schulze[2] is the proper representative of this tribe. No one has mixed up so many different kinds of styles; no one has composed such smooth and elegant verses; no

[2] Ernst Conrad Friedrich Schulze, born at Celle, March 22nd, 1789; died ibid, June 26th, 1817: Pysche; Cecilia (a romantic poem, in 20 cantos); The Enchanted Rose. See Foreign Quarterly Review, vol. i.

one has plumed himself in such an arrogant and presuming manner. His Cecilia is a ragout,—made up of the beauties of Homer, Ossian, the Niebelungen, the Norse legends, Tasso, Ariosto, the Easterns, &c.;—an essence, extracted from all the epic poems ever written. His Enchanted Rose is the *ne plus ultra* of sweetness, of flowery phrases, and euphonies, — a poetical prattling without any meaning, for it is nothing but a trivial allegory. This fondling and over-refining; this swelling and waving, which Jean Paul nicknamed Nihilism, really ends in nothing; the sooner, fortunately, the more extravagant it is. This whole style, therefore, by which Ernst Schulze was characterized, may be called "the galloping consumption of poetry;" one of its luckiest diseases too, for it is one of the shortest. One would think it surrounded itself with so many sweet-smelling flowers, only in order to deaden its own offensive exhalations.

Graf Platen[3] avoided the mixing up of tastes, by treating each one in accordance with its own peculiar characteristics; yet he fell into the mistake of attempting to master too many. Thus he sometimes wrote romantic comedies in the style of Shakspere, Gozzi, and Tieck; sometimes classic works, in faithful imitation of Aristophanes; sometimes excellent *Ghaselen*, in the style of the Easterns; and in all he hit the right tone, and distinguished himself by a rare power of versifi-

[3] August Graf von Platen-Hallermünde, born at Anspach, 1796; died December 5th, 1835: poems; Ghaselen; Siege of Cambray; The Mysterious Fork; The Romantic Œdipus.

cation. But they were nothing but imitations: the contents of his poems did not seize upon the mind, and they appeared more unsatisfactory, just because their form was so perfect. Brought up in the tenets of the school of Goethe and Schlegel, he could not understand either the false course he had pursued, nor the reason why he was not popular. Out of humour, he went to Italy, and resolved not to return till his country had acknowledged him as its greatest poet, next to Goethe. When there, he wrote works which were intended to astonish every one; but they never appeared, and he died in a foreign land. His best imitators are Kopisch[4], who endeavoured to equal him in harmony, and Herrmann von Herrmannsthal, who composed very pretty *Ghaselen*.

It was one of the eccentricities of this man, that he entered into a violent poetical controversy with Immermann[5],—a poet, who resembles him most of all the German poets; who belongs to the same school; who suffers from the same error, and the same diseased pride. Immermann's verses are not so classically correct as those of Platen, but he has ranged among more styles,—always unsatisfactory and always himself unsatisfied. Leaving romanticism he imitated sometimes Schiller's tragic seriousness, sometimes Heine's frivolity; always, however, leaving behind a feel-

[4] August Kopisch, born at Breslau, May 26th, 1799; alive in Berlin: novel,—A Carnival at Ischia; poems; Vater Noah; translating Dante.

[5] Karl Immermann, born at Magdeburg, 1796; alive in Dusseldorf: plays,—The Prince of Syracuse; The Vale of Ronceval, &c.; Alexis; Merlin; Epigone; The Sacrifice of Silence; Munchausen (1839); Collected Works (i. to x. vols. 1834–40.)

ing of unbelief in life. The reader does not believe either in his seriousness or in his jesting; he only believes that the poet is amusing himself with the one, as much as with the other, without entering heart and soul into either. He leaves us impressed with the feeling that he is a many-sided man, who writes without being inspired by his subject, and who can only be charged with the fault of appearing inspired, or of complaining of the want of inspiration.

Wilhelm Müller[6] abandoned the merry songs of travellers and millers, to write phil-hellenic heroic ballads; and these again for novels, in the style of Tieck and Hoffmann. Waiblinger[7] first wrote a novel, which stood half-way between the Werter of Goethe and the Agathon of Wieland; next, modern Greek heroic poems, in the style of Byron; and lastly, moral tales and novels, in the style of Tieck. Edward Arnd[8] passed over from the romantic drama to sacred tales. Stieglitz endeavoured to imitate all the sages of the East, at one and the same time. Similar changes and attempts in the most varied styles occur in countless other younger poets, who, however, are of less importance.

[6] Wilhelm Müller, born at Dessau, October 7th, 1795; died ibid, October 1st, 1827: Rome and the Romans; Poems from the Papers of a Travelling Bugleman; Songs of the Greeks; Specimens of Modern Greek Songs; edited the Library of the German Poets of the 17th, century, 14 vols.

[7] Wilhelm Friedrich Waiblinger, born November 21st, 1804; died at Rome, January 17th, 1830: novels,—Phaeton (1819); Tales of Greece; Anna Boleyn.

[8] Edward Arnd, alive at Bonn: Cæsar and Pompey; Brother and Sister von Rimini; Jewish poems.

We must here mention the various attempts to treat romantic tales in classic hexameters. In this department the Tunisias and Rudolph von Habsburg by Ladislaw Pyrcker[9], prince-primate of Hungary, and the Malta Delivered of Lindenhan[1], are pre-eminent for the masterly manner in which they handle the verse. Kannegiesser's[2] Tartaris or Silesia Freed, possesses many beauties which are quite Homeric. Conz[3] and Gries[4] are more distinguished for their translations than for their own poems. The former devoted himself to classic as well as chivalrous works; the latter confined himself principally to the poems of Spain and Italy.

Falk[5], too, was a reflection of many hetero-

[9] Johann Ladislaw Pyrcker, von Felsö-Gör, born near Langlh, in Hungary, November 2nd, 1772; alive, archbishop of Erlau: Pearls of the Holy Past; Tunisias; Rudolph von Habsburg.

[1] A. C. Lindenhan: epic poems; Adelaide; Malta Delivered.

[2] Karl Ludwig Kannegiesser, born at Wendemark, in the Altmark (Prussia) 1781; alive, professor in Breslau: dramas; Love and Marriage; translated Dante's Divina Commedia and Lyric Poems; translated passages of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Spenser's Faery Queene, and Beaumont and Fletcher; lyric poems; descriptive poems; Prinzlau, &c. &c.; Mirza.

[3] Karl Philipp Conz, born at Würtemberg, October 28th, 1762; died at Tübingen, June 20th, 1827: poems; translated Æschylus, &c.

[4] Johann Dietrich Gries, born at Hamburg, February 7th, 1775: poems; translated Tasso, Ariosto, Bojardo, Calderon, the Ricciardetto of Fortiguerra, &c.

[5] Johann Daniel Falk, born at Danzig, 1770; died February 14th, 1826: satires; The Graves of Rome; The Prayers, &c.: poems; novels; Goethe Portrayed from Familiar Personal Intercourse (English by Mrs. Austin).

geneous cultures. All styles, whether classic, romantic, or modern, played confusedly through his head, and he endeavoured to combine them in the most unnatural and humorous forms: but he soon saw the folly of such an endeavour; he, therefore, turned from the varied spectrum to the pure and simple light. A father to the fatherless, he died covered with the well-merited fame of patriarchal piety. Every one knows the anecdote of the physician who recommended his patient, who was afflicted with melancholy, to go to the theatre to see the celebrated comedian, and who received the answer:—Alas! I am the celebrated comedian! Savage pleasure is closely allied to melancholy; Falk, however, has proved that the extremes of poetical richness and of Christian poverty, of the satirist and the pietist, are very near each other,—Falk, who from a Scarron became an Abbé de l'Epée. The latter part, however, seems to have been far more natural to him than the former, for his satires have no originality. His wit had no steady aim, it merely grazed objects, without wounding them deeply with its sting. He had none of the acuteness of a Rabelais, a Swift, or a Börne; neither had he the happy humour of a Tieck or a Jean Paul. In his satires, much, even in respect to the form, appears forced, artificial, and imitated. He could not have succeeded in this path. As soon as he learned which was his false and which his true calling, he cast away for ever the pen of satire, and founded in Weimar the institution for the education of orphan children, which, called after him, has become so

celebrated,—thus giving a rare example of self-denial and true courage. Casting away every vain feeling of the author, he returned from the world of shadows to that of reality; from that of a desert fantasy to nature, and devoted his every exertion to a difficult and severe task. Disregarding the sneers of the proud and high, he went on his way, using all his endeavours to mitigate and crush in the bud, the misery and vices of the meanest among the people. Never has a satirist reaped from thorns such noble grapes.

The greater proportion of the imitations, and mixtures of various tastes, arose in our dramatic literature. Schiller's iambics, Schiller's euphony, Schiller's whole phraseology and declamation, prevailed in them almost to the exclusion of every other; yet they sometimes showed an inclination to imitate the greater license and bolder humour of Shakspere; sometimes to copy the more affected stiffness and formality of Goethe, and sometimes even the style and rhythm of Calderon. The prose in which Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller, wrote such excellent tragedies, was banished, as if by general consent, from the tragic stage. This was to be expected. If we write in prose, we must use our own thoughts: in verse we may easily spin out those of known sages. This is the origin of that crowd of tragic authors who, from year to year, hammer away at the cothurnus, and give us, every Fair, some dozens of tragedies in five acts, and all written in iambi. I have no wish to detract from the moderate talent of these common-place authors; but that is just the melan-

choly feature in the matter; they do nothing either quite bad or quite good; they are quite uninteresting; they arouse neither a right love nor a right hatred in the reader. The talent of these fellows is confined to a mere cleverness with respect to form, style, and verses, which, I confess, I do not value very highly; for it is not, nor cannot be difficult to drive the German car of Thespis in the iambic path which has been so often trodden. Their chief wants, however, are, imagination, fancy, deep feeling, a warm and vivid power of description, and, above all, spirit (*esprit*,—*Geist*). Being utterly destitute of originality, they always bring again before us the worn-out theme of aspiring heroes who are cast down, and of the young loving pair who must die. Heroes, as well as lovers, always speak in the same phrases. Seldom do we meet a new or noble image or thought swimming upon this sea of iambi, like a few vesicles of fat on watergruel.

The deficiency in invention is made up by feeling, which, however, is commonly misplaced. The tragedies are, as it were, dipped in sentimentality. Every character, even the fated rascal, overflows with sentiment. The correct principle,—that the greatest sinner is always a man, has been translated by our poet into the following one,—that the greatest sinner always remains sentimental and noble. Does any one rave, torture, or assassinate; does he steal, cheat, or lie;—he is a tender, sensitive, sweet enthusiast. Müllner's Oerindur, who shoots his friend from behind; Raupach's Russian prince, who makes his own

brother his servant; and Raupach's Abdallah, who cheats his ward, are all talkers of sentiment. The virtuous, too, speak of nothing but their virtue, which is almost always nothing but unnatural prudery, a monstrous love of self-denial, a coquetry with one's self, and a sententious would-be wisdom, which speaks like a book, but not like man.

The sacred Aristotle, the apostle of tragedy, says, that it should awaken sympathy and fear. But what do your tragedies, in which ye eternally harp on the worn-out iambic phrases of Goethe and Schiller, awaken? For whom do we feel sympathy but for yourselves; and of what are men afraid but that ye should write more of the same sort of stuff? Ye aim at effect, no doubt, yet ye excite nothing but a yawn. This is caused by your feeling for us; because ye do not move us, but yourselves; because ye have made the characters feel so much in the play that nothing is left for the public to feel. Laugh like mad and we shall weep, but if you weep yourselves, we shall laugh at you. Be calm, even at the most terrible events, and our hair will stand on end; but if yours stand on end, if we ourselves be not terrified, but only see you terrified, we shall remain sitting quite cool and careless. In one word, ye silly poets, treat us, the public, as one should treat the women, and we shall at once become monstrously interested about you; ye will do wonders. Be not affected, be not vain, be not sentimental; but be honest, natural, free-spoken, and you will be astounded at your progress. I see you smile. You fancy that you have already attempted this

by roughness. Not yet, not yet, ye silly sheep! Your scoundrels were bad enough, if you could have found it in your hearts to have painted them without magnanimity or sentimentality. But that was utterly impossible for you, ye well-brought-up children! Magnanimity is at your very finger ends; if ye still touch the fated-sinner so tenderly as not to offend his sin, he is immediately filled with your amiable feelings, and gives vent to enthusiastic phrases. Ye thought at first, in your innocence, doubtless, that you would terrify us in the way taught by Aristotle; but now it is very different, ye trust in yourselves. You think, that he, the villain, will now no longer terrify, but that he will give pleasure; and is not that far better? It is strange, passing strange, that the villain has, among our very hands, become such an amiable youth; but what matter is it? Does it not prove that everything we do must be amiable, and, if the villain inspire less terror, will not the poet appear so much the nobler? No! It is not true, that he who can imagine a thorough-paced villain, must himself have a bad heart. No; come here thou amiable villain, I will give thee a few friendly hints; ——So,——now I do not need to be ashamed of thee.

The mixing up of tastes has reached such a height, that authors endeavour to inspire, by exactly the same means, emotion, pleasure, terror, nay, even horror. Thus we find, in almost every play, beautiful young women, who act as if they were mad, or commit horrid crimes; and, on the contrary, horrible villains, who seem as if they

were about to melt away in sweet feelings and beautiful sentiments.

As, however, the tragic poets are aware, that neither the beauty of their verses, nor their sentimentality, can make anything great out of their puppets, they look for effect chiefly in a profusion of terrible situations, and in the gaudiness of costume and decorations.

It is almost impossible to convince tragic poets that theatrical effect is far oftener attained by moderation than by excess;—that one misfortune affects us more than if three misfortunes contend with one another in moving us;—that one wounded soldier inspires far more sympathy than a whole hospital;—that one tear is worth more than a flood of tears;—one word than a crowd of verses;—that a biting jest is more effective than a loud-sounding one; and a modest concealment of true emotion, far more beautiful than a family group, *á la* Iffland or Kotzebue, in which the whole household, including even dog and cat, embrace and kiss one another. It is very fortunate, however, that our tragic poets have not, with all their excessive hunting after effect, been able to destroy true tragic effect. No matter how often they exaggerate the sublime, the terrible;—the truly sublime, the truly terrible, will always remain sublime and terrible. This is plainly proved in our theatres. The most horrible fate-plays become unfashionable, or have but few, and those cold, spectators; while far more simple but true tragedies of the good old time, such as Emilia Galotti, are seen with ever increasing plea-

sure. Good heavens! what long, beautifully-rhymed, sentimental soliloquies, our modern romanticists would have put into the mouth of the good Emilia, and how our whining sentimentalists would have made Tellheim sigh and declaim,—the poor Tellheim, who speaks so little, and who always wears his arm in a sling.

Dresses and decorations are now likewise intended to supply the effect which the threadbare characters and sentiments can no longer produce. Of Shakspere, it is said, that his plays can, without decorations, move us to the very heart's core. The very reverse is commonly the case in our modern tragedies. The play is a matter of little consequence; the decorations and dresses are themselves everything. Thence comes it that the historical tragedies, which are to a great extent drawn from the historical novels, are now so popular. The tragic stage is become a masquerade, so that there is more need of the exertions of a stage-manager, who will, for the sake of the wardrobe, travel like an enthusiast through the world for the purpose of everywhere taking costumes, and views from nature, in order to picture them as truly as possible upon the stage; of an antiquary, who can, from engravings and sketches, prove the correctness of a costume of the middle ages; or, of the exertions of a tailor, than of those of the poet.

Since Schiller, no tragic poet has been so successful on the stage as Raupach[6]; and, since Kot-

[6] Ernst Benjamin Salomon Raupach, born at Straupitz, in

zebue, none has written so many plays. At present he produces about a dozen every year. He, doubtless, possesses a great acquaintance with the stage, a graceful manner of treating his subject, and an acute perception of what will be effective; to attain this last, however, he is always ready to sacrifice poetical truth and dignity. His failing is, that he writes only pieces for effect; yet is always attempting to write plays of character. His comedies are better than his tragedies, because the comic is better suited for this hunting after effect. Yet even here he uses too many means to produce a less effect than he might with more economy produce. His struggle to be effective is everywhere visible. There is a designedness, which is almost offensive, in all his works. Nowhere do we see any naïveté of genius, any traces of that divine negligence, without which no poem can please us; because a work of art must be exactly like a work of nature, if it be intended to have a proper effect upon us.

In addition to all this he borrows his effects, so that it is impossible to find in him, as in other great tragic poets, a spark of originality. In tragedy, he employs sometimes the solemn declamatory style of Schiller, sometimes the humorous luxuriance of similes which characterizes Shakspere; at one time the stiff and cold formality of

Silesia, May 21st, 1784: dramas,—Raffaelle; Robert the Devil; Genoveva; The Hohenstauffen, 8 vols., (dramatized lives of all the members of the House); &c. Comedies,—The Hostile Brothers, &c.; School of Life.

Goethe, at another, the overpowering fervour and earnestness of Calderon; yet, in all, we feel that this style is nothing but a poor imitation of a well-known original; and this feeling amounts even to pain, when we sometimes meet in him lines out of celebrated poets, or when he, affecting a higher tone than is natural to him, falls into nonsense or stupid bombast; or even when he makes a sudden descent from the high-flown to a vulgar style. In his comedies, he imitates in the same way the most different originals, among whom the accommodating and volatile Kotzebue, as well as the Viennese farce-writers, are to be seen alongside of the refinement of Goldoni, and the strong wit and high-wrought metaphors of Shakspere; a course of procedure which of course, produces a very heterogeneous mixture.

He, unfortunately, shares with Müllner in that longing already found fault with, to give a sentimental turn to vice and vulgarity, as is proved principally in his degraded Abdallah,—the antithesis to Shylock, the very antipodes to poetry. Shylock, a vulgar Jew, who is naturally avaricious, is ennobled by the truly tragical passion of national hatred; he sacrifices the baser love of gold to a higher passion. Abdallah, on the contrary, is painted as a man, naturally worthy, who degrades himself by allowing himself to be overcome by the love of money. In this way Raupach brings us down from the pure heights of tragic passion to the sphere of the thefts of Kotzebue and Iffland, to the gambling table and modest begging; into the sphere of the most common-place vulgarity, in

which everything hinges on Mammon. This sphere, like everything vulgar, belongs to comedy, not to tragedy; for its passions want every noble feature. No great poet, therefore, has ever introduced such baseness into tragedy; and Shakspere has proved in Shylock that Mammon and all its charms must cease where tragic passion and dignity begin. But as both our poets and the great majority of our theatre-going public are sunk up to the very ears in vulgarity, they cannot discriminate between what is vulgar and what is not.

Probably Raupach felt that he was not made to invent poetical characters; he therefore turned to historical ones, and represented the family of the Hohenstauffen, Cromwell, &c. This was acting like a sensible man; and these plays are really his best. He keeps as close as possible to history, bringing before his audience persons and events which are always worth remembering. He also, sometimes, ventures to make some allusion to politics, yet, as I think, unsuccessfully. His wit is too tame and too forced, so that his loyal tirades bear the mark of being cold studies. Isidor and Olga alone is a tragedy which is of any significance in the eyes of our Slavonian neighbours. It is a terrible picture of bondage; and one which would make a still deeper impression, were it not that it is filled with improbabilities, with an unnecessary hunting after effect, and a style often too refined.

Klingemann[7] preceded even Raupach in writing historical iambic tragedies in the style of Schiller;

[7] August Klingemann, born at Braunschweig, Aug. 31st,

but they are not distinguished either for inspiration or good taste, so that they are now almost forgotten.

Eduard von Schenk[8] became celebrated on the stage by his Belisarius. He sung the praises of the fidelity of the servant to his master, which was in this instance also fidelity to the state. His polished verses bear a great resemblance to the calm and untroubled clearness of Goethe, and are, like those of Schlegel and Platen, celebrated for their euphony. The same tendency is shown by the Herr von Uechtritz[9], whose Alexander and Darius, though praised by Tieck, never became popular.

Herr von Eichendorff[1] wrote with far more romantic enthusiasm, and more in the style of Shakspere. Herr von Auffenberg[2] wrote with a glowing enthusiasm in the style of Calderon, yet his

1777; died, Jan. 24th, 1831: Art and Nature; dramas,—Faust; Henry the Lion; Luther; Ahasuerus; Moses.

[8] Eduard von Schenk, born at Düsseldorf, 1788; died Dec. 11th, 1817: Belisar; Louis' Dream; Albrecht Durer; Canova's Death.

[9] Friedrich von Uechtritz, alive: Alexander and Darius; Rosamund; The Babylonians.

[1] Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff, born at Lubowitz, in Silesia, March 10th, 1788; alive; member of the ministry for ecclesiastical affairs in Prussia: Boding and Present (ed. by Fouqué); The Wars of the Philistines; dramas,—Meierbeth's End and Fortune; Ezzelin and Romano; The Last Hero of Marienburg; Much ado about Nothing; novels and poems.

[2] Joseph Freiherr von Auffenberg, born at Freiburg, 1798; alive, in Carlsruhe: dramas,—Humorous Pilgrimage to Grenada; Pizarro; The Spartan: Lion of Kurdestan.

Alhambra is too oriental, overleaping in its profusion of words and images the bounds of the drama. Herr von Zedlitz[3] showed much fire, but he is more distinguished as a lyric than as a dramatic poet. The Paria was written by Michael Beer[4], in a beautiful style, and with deep feeling. Deinhardstein[5] aimed at a correctness of costume, and a cheerful tone, things which are always very commendable, as repressing from the boards the threadbare idealism and the hollow tone of customary ceremonious phrases. Yet he is not entirely free from the fetters of sentimentalism and pathos

The affected (*vornehmen*) iambic tragedies had no effect on the public. On the other hand, plays which reminded the spectator of Schiller's Robbers, and Goethe's Goetz, written in a popular style, with some warmth, and assisted with rich scenery, were, though they could not stand a strict criticism, always seen with pleasure. Of this kind are the plays of the Frau von Weissenthurn[6] and

[3] Joseph Christian Freiherr von Zedlitz, born at Johannesberg, in Austrian Silesia, 1790 : Lyric Poems ; Garlands for the Dead; dramas,—Turturel; Napoleon's Midnight Review; The Star of Seville; The Prison and Crown (Tasso, —see Blackwood's Mag. vol. xlvi. p. 431).

[4] Michael Beer, born at Berlin, 1800; died at Munchen, March 22nd, 1823: poems; tragedies,—Paria; Struenza; Clytemnestra.

[5] Ludwig Franz Deinhardstein, born at Wien, 1789; alive; *Hof-theater secretäir* to the Burg-theatre in Wien: plays,—Hans Sachs; The Image of Danes; Boccacio; Garrick in Bristol; Veiled Lady; &c.

[6] Johanna Veronica von Weissenthurn, born at Coblentz, 1773: plays of all kinds (about 20 vols.)

the Frau (Charlotte) Birch-Pfeiffer, as well as the unpolished pieces of Holbein[7]. I think the public are quite right in preferring these well-meant and unassuming plays, which are especially popular in our provincial theatres, to the proud and assuming works, written for the court-theatre in iambic, smooth as glass, and as cold.

This assuming and courtly tone has at last become aware of its unpopularity, and assumed the appearance of despising itself; or weak minds, which have been spoiled by over-culture, have really sought refuge from the barbarous taste of the multitude in a kind of æsthetical monastery. The power of great poets exercised such an influence over many minds, that they could not even imitate them, but confined themselves to mere reverence, giving themselves passively up to the spirit of another, and living in it alone.

First Jean Paul, then Tieck, had each for a time his poetical followers; and the peculiar acuteness of these poets required a select public. But Jean Paul was too severe on the nerves, and Tieck was too catholic. There was, therefore, formed around Goethe a far more powerful sect, which assumed a far higher position at a far cheaper rate. To worship Goethe, and to say something about him, was far better than to be one's self a poet. The Camarilla, who fancied that they alone understood him, looked with contempt upon everyone else. Our whole modern

[7] Franz Ignaz von Holbein, born at Wien, 1779: plays (some original, but mostly adaptations).

poetry was looked upon with pity, as being a falling-away from the height of Goethe.

No one will deny that August Wilhelm von Schlegel[8], who plainly called Goethe a god, and upon whom Goethe looked down with cool contempt, as upon his servant, was the grand-chamberlain in this band of Goethe's court-servants. Schlegel himself has written but little; he could not do so for admiring Goethe. But he has taught the people how to honour Goethe as a god and a king. He was as much the theologian and interpreter of the will, his god, as the chamberlain and diplomatist of his king; and he founded for him a priesthood, which, being alone initiated, was intended to preserve the divine mystery of Goethe's writings, and, as alone dominant, to possess all the advantages and enjoyments of gentility.

If Franz Horn[9], Schubarth, and Kanegiesser, look with pride upon the circumstance of their having imitated the iron-assiduity of the scholiasts, in writing commentaries upon the writings of

[8] August Wilhelm von Schlegel, born at Hanover, September 5th, 1767; alive; professor in Bonn: translated Shakspere; Athenæum, 1799—1820; poem,—Ion; Characteristics and Criticisms; Lectures on Literature; The Spanish Theatre; Lectures on Dramatic Literature and Art (English by Black); Indian Library.

[9] Franz Horn, born at Braunschweig, July 30th, 1781; alive: The Poet; Love and Marriage; Sketch of the History of the Belles Lettres of Germany; Historical and Critical Account of German Poetry, from Luther till the Present Time; Shakspere's plays, illustrated by Franz Horn.

Goethe, August Wilhelm von Schlegel elevated this duty of the citizen to the dignity of a privilege of the noble, by connecting with the supposed deeper meaning of the poet, the whole code of morals of the aristocracy. Everything great and noble which could be found in Goethe, was now concentrated in the notion of the *Vornehm* (aristocratic and courtly).

There were formed so-called *Vornehme Geister* (aristocratic spirits), who looked upon themselves as totally distinct from the vulgar citizens; an idea in which Steffens took peculiar pleasure. But August Wilhelm von Schlegel was quite aware that the aristocratic mind must have an aristocratic body; that a nobleman must be neither cynical nor satirical, and that the nobility of philosophy and taste will never become distinguished, if it be not combined with the political nobility, with good society, with diplomacy, and the aristocracy of wealth. He was the more in the right, as Goethe himself always attached the greatest value to the social privileges of the nobles. Schlegel, following his example, acquired a patent of nobility, followed Madame de Stael in all her political wanderings, and endeavoured to imitate the most refined and courtly style.

This aiming at a double aristocracy of intellect, as well as of rank, is very conspicuous in Rahel[1],

[1] Rahel Antonie Friedrich Varnhagen von Ense (born Levin) born at Berlin, 1771; married 1814; died at Berlin, March 7th, 1833. Since her death, her husband has published Rahel, a book of Remembrance for her Friends; Gallery of

who has lately become very celebrated. What pleasure she feels in every aristocratic emotion! How like a child she prides herself upon every noble acquaintance, and how she is constantly decking out her mind. No thought is fine enough for her, she must always polish it still more. And all this is done in the holy name of Goethe, that we may imitate him, that we may live and die in him, the new Messiah of the Jews [2].

Another lady, Bettina (Brentano), became not merely like the former, intellectually, but really enamoured of Goethe; but, as Börne has very well remarked, she committed a great error in doing so, for Goethe was, during his whole life, a cold calculator, capable of no other kind of love than that of Aristippus, who desired nothing more of his love than of his meal,—namely, that he should like her. It is melancholy to see the glowing and enthusiastic Bettina embracing the cold stone,—a very female Pygmalion.

Hotho [3], who rather endeavours to transport himself, in an artificial manner, into a beautiful illusion, than to live in it, is less happy in declaring that there is no happiness in the whole

those who were intimate with Rahel (Letters). A beautiful article on her life and character appeared in a late number of the Westminster Review.

[2] Rahel was a Jewess.

[3] Heinrich Gustav Hotho, born at Berlin, May 22nd, 1802; professor of philosophy in Berlin: Preparatory Studies for Life and Art; Lectures on Æsthetics.

world, except in Goethe. There is something vexatiously tiresome in this minute and detailed account of an incorporation of body or, rather, of mind, with another's spirit. Had magnetism had anything to do with it, we should have attempted to think of Jean Paul's magnetic feast. One really ate, the others only mimicked his motions, and fancied that they were eating, whilst they had empty plates before them. In like manner, Goethe enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, but his attendants merely look at him, and, themselves hungry, rejoice at his appetite; or, when new enjoyments of their own gladden their eyes, they only think how Goethe would have liked them.

But this wonderful magnetism has its convulsions and extravagancies. Nature defends herself against the strange spirit, which attempts to master her, but she cannot altogether escape from its fetters. There are, therefore, in addition to the passive disciples, active ones, who, following a path of their own, comment upon the master in severe terms, and criticise him in every point. Some carry on the business of mystifying, obscuring everything which was clear in their master, and making a godlike mystery out a very simple earthly truth. Others, confining themselves to single thoughts of the master, build upon them systems of surprising one-sidedness, bolster them up by the most various sciences, and apply them to the most opposite events. A system of religion is extracted from the most worldly poet, a system

of æsthetics from the driest philosopher. This Christianity is explained out of Goethe, Shakspere out of Hegel.

This giving up of ourselves to exclusive and endless fathoming of the writings of the master, is not, it is evident, the highest task of the human mind, so long as aught else remains for us to do, to think, or to learn. The mind is born to remain free, not to give itself prisoner to the mind of another. The servitude of the mind is even worse than the servitude of the body.

Men seek in vain to conceal from themselves the comfortlessness of this modern idol-worship. He, who is not by a fortunate carelessness initiated into this aristocratical mystery,—he who supposes that there is concealed behind the polite triviality of the egotism of Goethe, a sacred earnestness, and who hopes to find there what will satisfy his longing for a boundless poetry,—he must, like the poor Charlotte Stieglitz, be brought to the very verge of despair. She, living in Berlin, amidst the worshippers of Goethe, heard nothing spoken of but the beauty of Goethe's poetry; she therefore formed to herself so fair an ideal of a life which would satisfy the expectations raised by this poetical model, that she soon sunk under the immense contrast between this ideal and the reality, and could not stay any longer in the world. She was, in short, a perfect Werter: she there committed suicide, because the world could no longer satisfy her too refined æsthetical wants.

Yet she was a wife? To what a pitch of un-

naturalness must that artificial want have arisen, when it could lead the wife of a young and beloved husband to commit suicide? Such are the fruits of that school of poetical over-excitement and insatiable curiosity, which permits the mind, ignorant of its simplest duties, and of the fairest and most natural fortune, to be destroyed in hunting after vain phantoms! The over-strained feelings are tantalized by dark presentiments of something which will satisfy their egotism, which the imagination can never bring into any definite form, and, which are therefore naught, because even the very highest happiness consists only in an aloofness of egotism, in a devotion, in a moderation, and, I may venture to say, in a fulfilling of our duties. Werter and Faust instructed the neglected feelings in a mournful æsthetical Epicurism, which, always speaking of the rights of man, leaves all his duties unperformed. Yet I would admit of all this hunting after the highest mental enjoyment, were the aim attainable; were it not necessary for it to end, as in the case of the poor Charlotte, in murder; or in Goethe in a cold resignation; or, as in Heine and his school, in the most worldly frivolity, without even arriving at that point which an unbridled craving really longed to reach.

This wild hunting of the mind has, for some time, been called a longing for freedom. The sacred name of freedom is profaned, when we denote by it an emancipation from all nature, all reason, and all duty. Whilst men are slack in forwarding the interests of freedom, where it is to

be found, they seek it where it is nothing but a caricature. This is the cause of that emancipation of women and children in our days, with which people are so busy, that they seem quite to have forgotten that of men.

The poor Charlotte allowed herself to be deceived by the comfortless idea of female emancipation; she adopted every notion which the unnatural character of our age produced. Her posthumous works are a remarkable monument of the æsthetical vagaries of our days. She saw an eternal and divine law in Goethe's system, which presented to this sybarite often only the satyr-like pleasure of the moment, a divine and eternal law. She saw in the malicious old-wives' tirades against married life, in which some of our older authoresses indulged out of private feelings, a profound wisdom, and fancied that woman must be free,—free from the bonds of wedlock. She thought, too, that man must be free; she therefore stabbed herself to free her husband,—to offer a sacrifice to him. What a mournful deception! what perverted conceptions of her duty towards her husband, of her own rights! In her we have an example of how Goethe can lead astray the hearts and heads of men, and how religion and morals have really been undermined by him, when pretending to lay the foundations of the Beautiful. Thus a fair sacrifice has been offered up to this idol, whilst priests and prophets rise up on all sides, who announce him as the new Messiah, first of the Jews, and then of the whole world; and who say that he has come to cast down Christianity,

and to found a new religion of pure egotism and of the flesh; upon which the school of Heine is principally founded.

All those commonplace men, who yet could cover their vulgarity by an elegant exterior, have long looked upon Goethe as their master, and in a certain sense, as their poetical redeemer, in so far as he taught how vulgarity might be reconciled with poetry, and made holy.

Vulgarity is a notion which is suited only for cultivated ages. It betokens the retrogression of culture into our original want of civilization, which, however, endeavours to beautify itself, just because it is closely connected with culture. The rude unpolished man cannot be vulgar; but he who is civilized, and who yet cannot get quit of his original rudeness, but who gives himself up to it and beautifies it,—he is vulgar. This vulgarity is the principal evil of our age. Notwithstanding the advances which we have made in culture, we feel ourselves given up to a crowd of wild passions, which have been multiplied and inflamed by the oppression of external codes of morality. But the disease, as well as its cause, is concealed and palliated, and the poets have been the foremost in taking upon themselves the office of imparting to every vulgar trait, the veil of grace, of connecting every grovelling inclination of rough and degenerate nature with decorum and culture, with poetry, and sometimes even with religion. These connecters are, as is proper, highly praised; so that they earn the rich reward which so many sinners willingly bestow. These are mo-

dern sellers of indulgences, who forgive sins, in the name of poetry. They can deck out every kind of vulgarity in charming, proper, or desirable garb; they can represent every sin as elegant and amiable, and they can divest it of every hateful quality. They introduce vulgarity under the form of a more refined politeness, of a higher stage of culture and gentility; and if its sinful features cannot be entirely concealed, they are covered over, like an amiable weakness, with all sorts of Graces and Cupids, or are held up to admiration as originality, bold freedom, or allowable eccentricities. The pretext of a courtly refinement is best fitted for excusing the lower pleasures, because these have really been refined, because they really are most at home among the higher classes. The more gracefully they are veiled, the more attractive are they, so that the poet possesses the advantage of making most impression upon the corrupted senses, by appearing to attach the greatest weight to good breeding and good taste. Coarse rudeness would rouse moral blame, but it would no longer flatter dainty palates. Refined vulgarity, on the contrary, escapes that blame; and it is it which charms the most.

This tendency of Goethe and his school was attacked by Pustkuchen [4], in a remarkable satirical imitation of Goethe's *Wanderjahre;* by Pos-

[4] F. W. Pustkuchen, born at Detwold, Feb. 4th, 1793: Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre; Wilhelm Meister's Tagebuch; Thoughts of a Pious Countess.

garu[5], in a clever novel; and by Wessenberg, in his work On the Influence of the Belles Lettres upon Religion and Morals.

Herr von Rumohr[6], whose amiable materialism does not seek to lower æsthetical taste to mere animal pleasure, but rather to raise physical taste to a sympathy with beauty, in a masterly work on Cookery, strikes us as a rare but pleasant phenomenon among the aristocracy. Such hospitable appearances of the good old age, will, in all probability, become every day more rare. Here or nowhere is it comfortable, or, in Goethe's favourite phrase, *behaglich*. Sitting at this well-filled table, we may return to the middle of last century; but this we cannot do in reading the silly and lamentable book of Hotho, at the grave of the beautiful Charlotte, or by the impure and convulsive debauches of the school of Heine.

THE NEW ANGLOMANIA.

ALL the old schools have outlived their powers; romanticism became unpopular and weak, in consequence of its connection with politics; the patriotic poetry was silenced; the madness of the

[5] Posgaru, (Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Sarkow); alive; professor in Breslau: Seven Years Ago; Love Stories.

[6] Karl Friedrich Ludwig Felix von Rumohr, born in 1785, near Dresden; alive: Tours in Italy; Italian Inquiries; *Königs Geist der Kochkunst* (King's Spirit of Cookery); Tour in Lombardy.

school of Hoffman was, as might have been expected, nothing but a short paroxysm. In this way everything fell into an anarchy of taste, into the most varied intermixture of styles.

But a mysterious instinct leads poets to unite, to form a solid mass of granite amidst the sand. The productive power of the German genius was exhausted; there came forth nothing but silly abortions. The course of patriotism was arrested: it was thrust aside, and there expired. Even science lent no new enlivening impulse to German poetry. The new dominant school of Schlegel was unpoetical, unyouthful, apathetic, and unexciting, to the very core. Our poetical literature was, therefore, as before the days of Lessing, open anew to the influences of foreign countries, so that our neighbours could not unfold a new poetical energy without again making us the slaves of their spirit, their blind imitators, and the vassals of their taste.

They did so. The English and French improved the romantic taste, which they had adopted from us, in a national way, peculiar to themselves, and with all that energy which was to be expected from their consciousness of their national unity, and of their high station amongst the European nations, and with the applause which civilized nations can, without petty jealousy, pay to their great and distinguished spirits. During the first period of the Restoration, the Britons, Walter Scott and Byron, assumed the dictatorship, not merely on their own, but also on this side of the Channel. But the French soon com-

menced their literary revolution, and their romantic Jacobinism is now in the act of depriving the English of their sway.

We Germans, however, are again descending from the elevated position which we occupied in regard to the belles lettres, and are retrograding through the Anglomania to the Gallomania. Walter Scott and Byron became more popular, and have found more imitators in Germany than in England. Now, however, French romanticism has begun a career of victory among us, which is daily progressing.

This was unavoidable. The whole history of our literature proves, that the elevations and depressions, the strengthening and apathy in the literary world, always depends upon public, that is, political events. Thus, after the immortal struggle against France, the national energy of the Germans died away; the Restoration took the well-known turn; the German spirit was fettered and overborne; we could not but give way to the o'er-mastering influence of foreign nationalities. And we cannot be freed from these bonds, which will yet, perhaps, change oftener, but by a new patriotic energy, come whence it may.

The new Anglomania has, like the old one, its good features. The English have remained always alike; the steel of their manliness has never rusted. Were we condemned to learn from a foreign nation, we should find at least good and clever masters among the English. The style of the historical novel is fitted for a manly nation, for by it the great lessons of history are diffused,

and our views enlarged. Byron, too, was a manly character. We have got nothing from England which does not savour of strength.

Other circumstances, however, aided in rendering us so quickly fond of the historical novel. The pleasure of transporting ourselves among the illusions of all ages and nations, was at last compelled to select from the thousands of forms among which it fluttered, that which it liked best. The difficulty of imitating foreign and artificial rhythms, and, still more, the way in which they are worn out, by being too often used, necessarily weaned a multitude of poets, as well as the public, from lyric poetry; nay, it even produced a kind of horror of it. On the other, hand the novel offered itself as the most natural and pleasing form, as that which would be most lucrative for the author, seeing that they had been long in possession of the circulating libraries, and that the great body of the reading public derived almost all its poetical food from these institutions.

The spirit of the age, too, was favourable to the historical novel. The sympathy felt for public events, an acquaintance with history, had increased in a striking manner since the last wars. The rage for political theories was set aside, and experience and a value for history became the order of the day. Often, too, the present was concealed behind the past; and men invested the images of later with the garb of former systems.

The historical novel had been begun at an early period in Germany; but at that time it was not polished, nor did it become fashionable. We

have already mentioned it, when speaking of the Gallomania. Simplicissimus was a perfect and excellent historical novel. No less so was the Gallant Saxon, by Pöllnitz. Nicolai's Sebaldus Nothanker also deserves this name, for it is a masterly picture of the state of morals during last century. It is remarkable, that a lady was the first who attempted to tell the ancient history of her country in numerous novels. This was the celebrated Naubert[7], whose Eginhard and Emma, Conradin of Swabia, Hatto of Mainz, Elizabeth of Toggenburg, Alf von Dülmen, Konrad von Feuchtwangen, Philippine of Gueldres, Ulrich Holzer, Walther von Stadion, The League of the poor Conrad, Friedrich the Victor, &c., &c., gave to the reading public many vivid views of the past ages of Germany. Schlenkert[8], who told whole histories of the emperors in dialogue, was less successful, and less talented. On the other hand, the historical novels of Baczko[9], the Prussian historian, were both better and more popular. The slight sketches of Meissner[1], which are

[7] Christine Benedicte Eugenie Naubert, born at Leipzig, Sept. 13th, 1756; died Jan. 12th, 1819: New Popular Tales of the Germans; Thekla of Thurn; Walther of Montbarry; &c. &c.

[8] F. C. Schlenkert, born Feb. 8th, 1757; Moritz of Saxony; Henry IV.; Benhard of Saxe-Weimar; Rudolf of Habsburg; &c. &c. &c.

[9] Ludwig Adolf Franz Joseph Baczko, born at Lyk, East Prussia, July 8th, 1755: The Prussian Tempe; tragedies and novels; Repentance; The Miller and his Daughter; Annals of Prussia.

[1] August Gottlieb Meissner, born at Bautzen, Lusatia, Nov.

often mere anecdotes, were the most widely circulated, though his other writings are of no value. The declamatory and sentimental novels, in which Fessler commenced describing the classic world, in such works as the lives of Aristides, of Marcus Aurelius, of Attila, met with even less applause. His cold descriptions were far excelled by the Agathocles of Frau Caroline Pichler[2], a novel, which, though bearing some marks of modern sentimentalism, was yet conceived in a warmer and more enthusiastic spirit. It described in a truly poetical light the contrast between Christianity and the superstition of the heathens, the northern nations, the ancients and the orientals, during the first centuries of Christianity. This same lady has since written some patriotic novels, The Swedes in Prague, and Friedrich the Warlike.

Till this time, however, the historical novel had always belonged to a subordinate and less cultivated species. The great wars against the Revolution and Napoleon, which, confusedly intermingling the nations, brought the most remote ones together, showing us the Mamelukes of

3rd, 1753; died at Fulda, Feb. 20th, 1807: plays,—Johanna of Swabia; &c. &c.; historical novels,—Alcibiades; Bianca Capella, &c. &c.; Sketches (fourteen collections, thirty-six volumes).

[2] Caroline Pichler (born Greiner), born at Wien, Sept. 7th, 1769; died, 1838: novels,—Leonora; Agathocles, or the beneficial influence which Christianity had on mankind, written to oppose the infidel views of Gibbon; Siege of Wien in 1683; Dignity of Women; The Rivals.

Egypt in the Netherlands, the Portuguese in Moscow, the Scottish Highlanders in Greece, the Baschkirs in Paris,—these tableaux, with the varied costumes which they really presented to our admiring eyes, were the producing cause of that immense number of counterfeits which became fashionable under the title of historical novels. Kotzebue had already, from the same cause, brought all possible costumes upon the stage.

While everything was peaceful around us, we could even, with all our poetry, live, as it were, in the midst of our families. But now affairs are quite changed. We have been torn away from the bosom of our families, to act upon the great political stage of life, so that our poetry has now greatly widened its circle. The loving pair, which formerly formed almost the whole subject of poetry, is now become a nation. Our poetical heroes are, like our real ones, now undistinguishable amidst the mass. Is it possible that poetry would not do homage to the spirit of the people, seeing that all the great men of the age,—even the greatest,—have been compelled to yield to this giant power, which has just awakened from its ancient slumber? We have seen this spirit stride over the stage of the world; we have with our own eyes seen revolutions, popular inclinations, strange fates, terrible deeds and sorrows; and how petty, in comparison with this great reality, does everything appear, which we had hitherto imagined and dreamed of in our quiet family circle! If, therefore, poetry does not

wish to be put to the blush, it must imitate the zeal of history; and if it reverence the spirit of the age, it must connect itself with the element of history, as it did last century with that of philosophy. The historical novel is consequently the true child of its age.

It is natural that the historical novel should be nearly related to historiography; for, though it prefers describing what is beautiful, interesting, or attractive, while history, on the other hand, paints truth without regard to any charm, yet the matter is always the same. Both, however, are so closely allied in the province of special history, that they really pass into each other. Universal history is become so extensive that we have great difficulty in obtaining even a general view of its more important facts. We must lay aside the details; we can no longer insert them into the general mass, in the descriptions of Universal History. The collections in upwards of a hundred quarto volumes, which give a detailed account of universal history, and which reluctantly omit the account of a single Assyrian king, or German elector, have very justly become unfashionable on account of their unwieldiness. We now endeavour to attain a knowledge of the most important events of universal history in a compact epitome; and to seize upon individual portions like pictures in little frames, in biographies, descriptions of customs, and memoirs. These alone are the forms in which any one can paint in a satisfactory manner, what the history of whole ages and nations, or of the whole human race

must pass unnoticed. He who pursues the course of history in its leading features, cannot endure to have his interest destroyed by subordinate events; but we take perfect pleasure in the interests of the individual, when we leave the higher point of view, and place ourselves in one era of history, in one definite country, and in the view of one or a few men. At this point special history passes directly over into the novel. It matters little whether the biographer paint reality in all its attractive, romantic peculiarities, or whether the novelist accurately suit his work to the spirit and feeling of a specified age. If no common-place love affair, no philosophical idea be the aim of the author, he will conjure up only the spirit of antiquity, the remembrance of past days; and he will endeavour to be renowned for the fidelity with which he has described nature and reality. If he be successful, he really becomes an historian. The novel, then, is nothing but a mere unfettered form of history; a form, however, in which the spirit of history is often more truly reflected than in mere dry details. We derive more information regarding the customs of the age, and the character of the nation, from some old French and English novels, than from any historian; or if we think of the novels of Cervantes, what Spanish historian has given us so lively an idea of the customs and localities of that age? We may, therefore, be pretty certain that the historian is very right in calling the novelist to his assistance. This has of late become the more necessary, in consequence of the

novelist having adopted, to a very great extent, the matter of history, which, in its manysidedness, cannot be satisfactorily studied without the aid of the novelist, the biographer, and the memoir-writer. Since the era of the Reformation, history has gradually become more and more confused, so that the historian can give nothing but the progress of the leading events; the innumerable little episodes, which elucidate individual circumstances, must be left to the biographer, and even more to the novelist, who can place such little pictures of detail in the most ingenious frames, and in whose works posterity will find a more vivid picture of the past, than in all our newspapers.

From what has been said, it must be evident why the historical novel has been so universally cultivated in our age, and by all civilized nations. Though the English led the way, yet it suits every ear as well as the English. The English deserve this precedence, for they have retained their nationality better than any other nation. But we are not here speaking of English poetry, but of popular poetry in general. In Walter Scott we imitate not the Briton, but the poet of the past,—a past, of which every nation has its own. This is the reason that none of those national prejudices have been opposed to Walter Scott, which were formerly so vehement in their attacks upon other foreign poets. Walter Scott's style is always national, wherever a nation feels and comprehends its own power; and from those countries alone, in which the people, yet sleeping

under a despotic sway, know nothing of themselves, do we perceive no echo of his voice.

Thus the proud North America, whose sons had never before poetized, now began to imitate Walter Scott. The Republic could not away with the poetry of monarchy and aristocracy, but it instantly attached itself to the poetry of democracy.

It is strange enough that Walter Scott personally paid great reverence to the tory opinions, whilst his poetry was essentially of a radical nature. His fate, too, was that of a man of the people,—out of the mass, yet for the mass. The esteem paid to him does not nearly equal that almost sacred reverence which was paid to the older poets of the aristocracy, compared with whom he is almost like a plebeian. He excels, however, every other author in his immense popularity among the masses, and in the countless number of his imitators; this, too, is plebeian. Walter Scott has unintentionally divested poetry of its aristocratic privileges, and made it the property of the masses.

This poetry is democratical in its subject as well as its external form. The essence of the historical novel must be sought in something totally different from that to which historical descriptions had hitherto been confined. In the drama, history has been made merely a proof of human power, and a foil to the ideal. In epic poetry a divine providence has been assumed over poetry, and the prose of reality has been to some extent refreshed and enlivened by wonders from above. There man stood out of and op-

posed to history; here, however, the divinity disposed history from without, and treated it as mere dead matter. The historical novel, as in the hands of Walter Scott, shows us something quite different. Here man is only the product of history; a flower, as it were, which vegetates in the midst of it, is nourished by its juices, and held fast by its secret powers. Yet the divinity is not separated from the spirit of nature which still prevails in history; it does not wave above life, it is life itself; it works no wonders from above, which are in any way different from those of common life below; but it influences everything only from within, and everything that it produces, or nothing, is a wonder. In this view, Poetry returns, in a certain sense, to pantheism and the worship of the elements, and sees what is sacred only in everything that exists; it forms, however, to itself no gods without and above other things. Poetry was hitherto attached to polytheism, or monotheism, in so far, as it always placed only certain groups of distinguished men and families, or even only single heroes, in the foreground. On the other hand, the new style,—which describes, in place of heroes, whole nations; in place of individual characters, the features, spirit, and tone, the customs and peculiarities of whole countries and ages; in place of single deeds, the lives of whole generations,—may be called a kind of poetical pantheism. This poetry can be denoted only by the characteristic of—the Democratic. The hero in the foreground is always the poetical monarch, and whole groups in the foreground form a

natural aristocracy. The people in the background were really degraded to play the part of real mutes. In our modern historical novel, however, this same people play the chief part, and those who formerly were thrust into the foreground, are only its organs, selected from among them, from all its classes, nay, out of its very dregs. This is the reason that the heroes of all the novels *à la* Walter Scott, are never Ideals; they are nothing but honest men, the representatives of a whole species, and, in so far as a hero of this kind seems to govern the whole novel, he serves only as a cord, on which to string, like beads, the descriptions of countries, of nations, and of customs.

Hitherto man has always been the theme of all kinds of poetry, and even the new romantic poetry cannot quite shake itself rid of its old habits; but the latter describes man more in the genus, while formerly he was described as an individual. Its hero, therefore, is no longer the individual, but the people. By this means it is closely bound to nature and actual history, for the genus always follows the quiet impulse of nature; the individual alone, ridding himself of it, strives after ideals. The poet may make what he chooses out of the individual, but he must take a people as he finds it. The only thing he can do here is, to acknowledge the Poetical in its reality, not to create it by his own power. However successfully men have been idealized, no one has yet succeeded in idealizing the race as a whole, or even one particular nation. The Utopian dreams

of model nations are mere empty bubbles; the embellishments of real nations, for example, the Swiss idylls of a Clauren, have always been very silly. If the poet paint a nation, he must paint it true to nature.

The elements of a popular poetry of this description are afforded us by nature. A nation is like a plant, it takes root in a definite soil or climate. The country modifies its character as well as its whole existence, thus affording the poet an opportunity of rivalling the landscape painter. Here this rivalry, which men formerly blamed, is rightly placed. The idyllic images, which are only intended to give us landscape-paintings, are commonly mere toys, and the painter always excels the poet, who only endeavours to equal him. It is otherwise with the grand views of nature, as explained by Humboldt; for here a philosophical spirit is added, which the painter cannot express, while the poet can. Language, however, has a still greater advantage over colours, the poet over the painter, where it is necessary to mark the *historical spirit of a country*. This *historical spirit*, if I may use such an expression, is commonly the most interesting, the most charming, and the most poetical spirit of a country. It is, as it were, breathed into it by the spirit of the inhabitants. The soil and the people exercise, at least in our imagination, a reciprocal influence upon each other's peculiarities. In this way there is a great difference between a country rich in historical remembrances and one newly-discovered and yet unpeopled; in this way, too, an inhabited country is distinguished

from the other by more than by its merely physical properties. We never think of such a country without at the same time thinking of its people, their character and history; so that in this way it receives that romantic charm which attracts us. No one can awaken this charm so well as the poet, who paints not merely a country, but also its people and history; who not only places us amidst its natural features, like the painter, but also in the age and its events. The poet has here the advantage of being enabled to make countries very interesting, which never could have been so had the painter alone described them.

A second element is afforded by the physical character of the people itself, the national physiognomy, the natural disposition, the temperament, in which nature unfolds an inexhaustible luxuriance of interesting peculiarities and deeply-romantic charms. A boundless field is here opened to the poet,—a field which has as yet been very little cultivated. The fictions of various nations have, as it were, only involuntarily hitherto borne a national stamp. The endeavours of the poet were not intended to denote the national features; they were rather meant to cast away from them those facts which bore a reference to mankind in general. The countless number of heroes whom poetry has created within this last thousand years, may be better classified according to a psychological system, in which a normal man appears as the type of the whole race, than according to one of geography and history; or, to use a philosophical expression, may be better classified by the

analysis of the possible, than by the synthesis of the real. The great majority of poetical schools transfer something which is universally human into a fabulous world, which nowhere exists; thus retaining no firm spot upon earth, no real space in history. Their heroes are, as they appear in the sweet dreams of the world-improver, not such as real life shows them to be. They are the ideals of all the virtues or vices, all perfections or pleasures, which are possible for man; they are never the true reflection of what is real. What can be more natural and more innocent, than to enjoy in fancy those pleasures which we really have not; and what can be more noble for man than to idealize, to ennoble, and deify himself in poetry, so long as he cannot do this in real life. Poetry points out to man the path to every greatness, virtue, and holiness, and it tells him that he should not pine away amidst the vulgarity of every-day life. But the more independently the spirit exalts itself, the less will it be able to observe, with a hostile eye, nature, and those first and sacred bands which chain us to reality. He will become reconciled to necessity, and those features which at first appeared hard, oppressive, confining, petty, and vulgar, will be covered over with new charms. The real, from which he has endeavoured to escape into the land of the ideal, will gain a still, but powerful charm in his eyes. With boding thoughts he will fancy that he will again find holiness in the powers of nature,—holiness, which he had probably sought and given up in his boldest dreams. This will soon lead him

to find everything interesting in its way in the great garden of life, but particularly to look to the whole in its harmonious connection and its charming variety. A little flower, which he formerly despised, will become valuable in his eyes, from the significance which it bears to the whole. In this way, he will find wondrous attractions in the real life of the present and the past, in men and their desires, over which the future and its ideals, if not forgotten, will not be suffered to rule alone. The poet will now succeed in using, in an idyl or a farce, and so gaining, in a new and thankful way for poetry, that which had hitherto been so insignificant that it had never appeared worthy of sympathy. He will be able to exalt the common man from among the people, merely because he belongs to this people, to this rank, in this country, in this age,—circumstances, which will impart to him a poetical charm, which presupposes no distinguishing personal qualities. In him we shall not see the person, the hero, the shepherd, or the caricature, but only the representative of his people, his age, and its customs. The romantic charm which imparts to him this physiognomy, will be heightened by contrasts, so that we shall at last see not merely such men with their various countenances, motions, and dresses, collected as in a child's primer, but they will live and act in their age, which they will represent to us in all its peculiarities. National features have hitherto been treated too much as something accidental or indifferent, or all nations have been measured by an ideal standard,—weight being

given only to those features in which they resembled one another,—or they wished to plane them with the great plane of culture and enlightenment. But in the peculiarities, varieties, and separation of nations, that human principle is concealed as wonderfully as light is in colour, from which it can never be separated. There is a certain temperament, a determination, a tendency and power of soul, which corresponds to every physical variety, and the essence of all these tendencies is the first thing which reveals to us the boundless wealth and the depth of humanity.

With these must be combined a third element, the intellectual character of the people,—their soul. It is more difficult to paint this than the external features of a people, especially if we wish to follow out its minutest shades; yet its most inexhaustible feature is poetry. All nations are almost equally endowed with this unfathomableness of character, with this romantic depth, which conceals from us the germ of so many peculiar cultures. The poet finds in every people some sacred and incomprehensible features, which are present, we know not how or why; which are as real and natural as anything can be, but at the same time as wonderful. History is every moment closing the circle, and what is past never returns; but in the popular character itself the fountain of new cultures always wells forth from an unfathomable depth. The Poles afford the best and most striking examples of what a nationality, an innate, indestructible popular character and popular feeling is. Yet it cannot be denied that

a general view of the nations of the earth will cause many mournful reflections to the philanthropist; but, on the other side, 'everything high and excellent upon earth' is connected with that innocent virgin-like existence of noble races, in whom the inborn power of nature has directly effected what the highest culture could never have attained. And suppose that there should be an equally civilized universal humanity, in which all differences of nations should be obliterated, a freemason-like bond diffused over the whole world, how uniform, how tame and waste would it appear, when compared with the rich, luxuriant, and many-coloured garden of the past; for though the philosopher could at last succeed in leading all the streams of nations into the ocean of one only and similar brotherly community, the poet would ascend the streams, and go back to those mountains which lie in the horizon of history.

We shall consider as the last element, *the fate, the deeds, the history of the nations.* When Schiller says,

> In thine own bosom are thy destiny's stars[3],

this applies to all nations. Nature determines itself; the soul constructs its own body; the soul of the people embodies itself in peculiar organs, which we acknowledge as customs, ranks, and states. These organs either act or suffer, so that their inmost individuality is at the same time their

[3] The Piccolomini, Act II. Scene 6.

external destiny. This view, which is now acknowledged by historians, is still more indispensable to the poet, for it is completely poetical, nay, it is the only poetical key to history. The poet can choose his position in various ways; he can place himself amidst or above a people, or between two nations, and in every position he will see that history presents new charms. If he place himself in the soul of a people, his poetry will glow with that patriotic fire which inflames every heart with a like glow, and which has always maintained an irresistible poetical strength, which is the lyric poetry of the historical novel. If the poet place himself above life and the age, he will be able to seize upon its image in the purest manner. The spirit of the nations is like an echo,—it answers our questions best when it is at some distance. It therefore expresses the past most clearly. The age effects what the poet requires; it brings into a small compass the image of the nations and of history. Its very distance diffuses over every object a magical odour and veil which imparts to it an affecting interest, so that it did not require the elegy of the poet, to shed the soft charm of melancholy over a picture of antiquity. Fallen nations in particular, as well as the Past in general, appear to us to have an inherent poetical feature; the Present alone honours vulgar common-placeness and prose; in like manner as we become wearied only in the land in which we live, whilst the great panorama of the nations around us inspires us with wonder and longing, and fills the soul with a boundless

richness of images and feelings. From the wide circuit of the distant and the Past, the poet selects only clear and connected pictures, which he places in a pleasing light before us. We gaze into the strange Present as into another world, in which everything is as natural as if it yet lived;—and this is the epos of the historical novel. In fine, the poet brings together various nations, selecting for that purpose epochs of history in which they really came into actual conflict. Here every peculiarity is exalted by contrast, rivalry calling forth the highest activity of the national spirit. In wars and revolutions all colours intermingle in glowing hues; the character becomes acute; the slumbering powers awaken, and reveal, in their great bursts of passion, the leading points of the feelings of the nations. This is the dramatic part, and the perfection of the historical novel.

By considering these various reasons, we must be convinced that the people must always be the real hero of the historical novel. With this is connected the law, that the poet must endeavour to give a representation as objective as possible; for though it be permitted him to endow one man with his own ideas and feelings, this cannot be allowed when describing a nation or its representative. The people must be faithfully portrayed, and the poet must never allow himself voluntarily to misrepresent history. We find such misrepresentations in many novels. Certain poets transfer the interests, feelings, and party views of this age into the Past, an act which is a sin against poetry.

Every age has its own poetry, which must never be falsified. A second imaginary world is open to the poet, in which he may plant everything which he invents, but upon the firm soil of reality, he must plant poetry as he finds it planted there by nature.

In addition to this, the poet must shun two extremes, if he wishes to give a characteristic portrait of the poetry of the people. He must avoid anything too high, as well as anything too low. Certain heroes of history, who advance, as it were, beyond the circle of the nation, who possess the genius of all mankind, and whose overpowering strength rends the bonds of the customs and manners of their country, are too high. Such heroes, when they appear, attract every eye, and the people retire into the obscure background. He, therefore, who wishes to portray the people, must take his hero from among them, not from such an extravagant height. But there is also a sphere which is too low, from which he must not take his hero, except at the risk of misrepresenting the people. In this case the poet passes over, like a Teniers or an Ostade, to that last boundary of the human, where it is closely allied to the nature of the bear or ape.

The modern frivolity which pervades the pictures of past ages, is even more unsuitable, though more common. We expect a true, and therefore an original picture of the age into which the poet transports us; but what do we commonly find? Neither more nor less than a repetition of the loving pair so well known in our modern novels,

who, with their struggles, their sorrows, and denials, occupy the foreground of the picture, whilst the historical background is poorly painted with some colours borrowed from the historian. Whether the scene be laid in Spain or in Poland, in Turkey or in Scotland, in the age of Charlemain, or of Luther, of the Hohenstauffen, or of Frederick the Great; we have always in the foreground the young and attached lover, and the sentimental young lady, who long loves and weeps, but at last heroically renounces. These lovers of every age and every clime, always speak in the same way, and use the same high-flown phrases about virtue and magnanimity. This then is called an historical novel. The only difference consists in the decoration. Punch remains on the stage, and the scenes are changed behind him. To-day, he is the son of a Scottish chief; to-morrow, a Nürnberg citizen of the sixteenth century; next day, a French emigrè. If, perchance, a real historical hero should enter, he commonly walks humbly over the stage, and seldom disturbs, even for an instant, the tedious dialogues of the lovers, or of those who are plotting against them. Were we to lop off these dialogues and the modern foreground, we should not have ten really historical pages left of many a thick historical novel.

In many historical novels the simplicity of history is disfigured by the addition of strange adventures, which are as much misplaced as the modern love-dialogues, which have just been found fault with. Mysterious spies, disguised

guardian angels, mad or prophetical old women, and inhuman villians, must, therefore, enliven the silliness of the loving heroes; and yet, notwithstanding, all this medley of insipidity and folly is called an historical novel. In this way well known historical occurrences, which offer a wide field for the description of poetical characters and situations, are often so disfigured that we cannot recognise them. The novel portrays, not the celebrated heroes of history, but totally different figures; it relates, not the well-known occurrences, but adventure after adventure, which have nothing in common with real history.

But we must not pass unnoticed a striking feature of novels of this kind, we mean, the prolix style. This is not merely a fault of poverty of spirit, it is more, it is a fondness, a fashion, which is worshipped by many even of our best authors. The author, filled with the praiseworthy desire of mystifying the reader and of delaying the denouement as long as possible, uses every endeavour to spin out the work, by filling it with long empty intervals, prolix preparations, and a certain artful deceit, which ten times raises our expectations of a denouement, and as often deceives us. In this, however, they forget that the novel is not a drama; that a tiresome preparation, a dialogue of undue length, which fills up the intervals, is not so pleasant as the preparatory scenes and episodes on the stage; and that, if we know the end of the story, nothing in the world will induce us to read again a tiresomely wrought-out novel. Novels, which enchain us on every

side by their talented manner of description, are the only ones which can be read again and again, and always with new pleasure. Novels, on the other hand, which are evidently written to vex the reader in every way by their emptiness and insignificancy, and which rouse him only in so far as to induce him to read quickly on, so as at last to come to the interesting parts,—such novels are never read more than once, just as we eat one meal to begin as soon as possible another.

The intolerable coarseness and prolixity of historical novels, is caused principally by their tasteless descriptions of all sorts of situations, personal qualities, and dresses. Everything is described; not a button or a seam of the dress is forgotten, just as if we had to do with a tailor, instead of a poet.

We also find in the historical novels, as, for example, in those of the school of Hoffman, a love of the terrible, which has been still further extended in the new Gallomania. The numerous barbarisms of the middle ages which have been presented to us, the rudest scenes of soldiers, of North American savages, pirates, &c., must blunt our nerves, and thus render them susceptible of the strongest moral poison of the French literature.

These faults, symptoms of which may be found even in Walter Scott, are notorious among his imitators, among whom there are, however, many very distinguished writers, who have often surpassed him in the beauty and delicacy of their pictures, if not in the richness and truth of their

pictures. I name here only the most distinguished and most popular, for it is impossible to survey that whole army of novelists which is yearly increasing. Hans Sachs became, of a shoemaker, a poet. Our poets have again become shoemakers, and are now hammering away at the leather on Walter Scott's last. This labour is carried on quite in a business-like manner, for eighty or a hundred historical novels are published every half year.

Tieck acknowledged the value of the historical novel, by himself writing The Rebellion in the Cevennes. In his novels (*Novellen*) too, he often chose an historical background. Yet he was always swayed by those ironical views of the world, that clever sporting with those opinions and impulses of men which are always annihilating themselves. Far from transporting us into one definite age, he, now that he is no longer impressed with the illusions of Catholicism, tears us with a malicious joy from the midst of that illusion, inspiring us with such mistrust, that we fancy there is something ridiculous in everything we formerly thought.

The philosopher Steffens, on the other hand, set to work in earnest to write historical novels. He wrote three which are all very like; which mutually complete one another; yet which are really only one. Steffens wished to represent only himself, in all the relations in which he stood to science, religion, and politics, as well as his age, from the beginning of the century till now; his work, however, was intended to be a novel,

and, according to custom, to contain a multitude of love and domestic stories, which were all to bear a peculiar relation to his country, Norway. What had in him been united in a subjective way, by a strange combination of circumstances, he now resolved to connect in an objective manner in one single novel. Thus there was produced a strange medley of painting of nature, of historical description, of philosophical reflection, and heartfelt enthusiasm; so that though we may be inclined to admire everything as scintillations of an all-comprehensive genius, yet we are disturbed by the seductive connection, and the preponderance of reflection which is constantly destroying the illusion, by interrupting the peaceful course of the tale. In consequence of his continually putting into the mouths of his characters speeches which concern Steffens alone, his personal inclinations, and his relations, and which bear far more relation to his last polemical works than to the progress of the novel, we are unwillingly torn away from the work, and neglect the story for the author,—a state of things which is always a fault in a historical novel.

In this way of reasoning Steffens imitates Tieck, except that the latter, in place of almost unconsciously obeying an æsthetical necessity, moderates the freedom of philosophical excesses, and always traces in a line of beauty all the threads of conversation to a connecting centre, whilst Steffens, with the carelessness inherent to a genius, leaves the torn threads hanging, as it were, for ornament out of the novel. In this Tieck, though a poet,

shows that he is also a Platonist, and a philosopher. Steffens, on the contrary, though a philosopher, acts like a fantastic poet. This phenomenon does not stand alone. If we go through all our poets, we find that those who are most exclusively poets, show the greatest regularity and self-restriction; while, on the contrary, those who are more inclined to reflection and philosophy, display the greatest irregularity and caprice. The result, therefore, seems to be, that poetry, in proportion as it is removed from philosophical forms, will be really more philosophical in its substance; and that philosophy, on the other hand, will be more poetical the less it avails itself of poetical forms. There seems to be only one deficiency inherent in its very nature, which here seduces the poet to the philosophical, there the philosopher to the poetical form. Even allowing that the same genius could, with the same creative power of fancy, produce a poem like that of Homer, and a philosophy like that of Aristotle, he would, of course, not mix them with each other, but would form each with as much distinctness as he would do a natural history, and a system of algebra. The differences exist in the subject, so that though the artist be the same in both cases, yet the artistical forms must be very different, according to the subject. Men should attend to this world-old rule of an inalienable classicism, in our romantic age, which melts down all the peculiar qualities and forms of the world into a Corinthian brass,—

which amalgamates and dissolves everything into a sea [4].

One of our best historical novelists is Van der Velde, who forms the transition from romanticism proper and the legendary poetry into the historical novel, thus standing halfway between Fouqué and Walter Scott. We must allow that Fouqué possessed more of the spirit of poetry than Walter Scott, whilst the latter is more self-possessed and manly, never falling into Berlin childishness like the crested German baron. Van der Velde [5] is, if not so poetical as Scott, at least more manly than Fouqué. The very circumstance of his having, in the selection of romantic subjects, turned as often to the legendary world as to history, is in itself a proof, that he cares less for the painting of historical descriptions, than for a true poetical

[4] Steffens felt the necessity of imparting, in the form of novels, those thoughts and raptures which rioted within him, and which could find no place in his philosophical writings. With him the poetical creation is not the end and aim; he only asks from it tints to paint what scientific language cannot express. His creations well forth from a richly imaginative mind, moved by the boldest thoughts, and obtain for him a high place among novellists. Yet they are neither novels nor tales (*novellen*). The chaos of his feelings has not been put in order; the stable has not been separated from the unstable: the spirit broodeth on the face of the waters. He can form single figures, but he cannot arrange his figures so as to form a whole. Conv. Lex. d. Geg.

[5] Franz Karl Van der Velde, born at Breslau, Sept. 27th, 1779; died ibid, April 6th, 1824: poems; tales; novels; Prince Friedrich; The Conquest of Mexico; The Maltese; The Anabaptists; Petrarcus; &c., (twenty-five vols).

interest, which latter he avails himself of in his historical descriptions. He occupies the imagination in a pleasing way, so that we may, in every respect, term him a good story-teller, of that kind of which there is in the East a whole class. Though talkative, as story-tellers must always be, he never falls into the intolerable vulgarity of the English and German imitators of Walter Scott. There is, however, another characteristic of him which we must praise: he places the world of fairy tales, or of romanticism, not merely as an idle decoration alongside or in the background, but he also fills the foreground with a modern attached couple and their concomitants, as so many historical novelists do, who stuff the Hermann Lange of Lafontaine into a suit of armour, and the Aunt of Madame Schopenhauer into a nun's garment, and then give out this childish stuff as an historical novel.

Willibald Alexis[6] imitated Walter Scott so well, that his Walladmor was really long looked upon as Scott's, a circumstance upon which Alexis founded his literary fame. He has a happy touch, a talent of graceful imitation, a pleasing style; but he wants power of invention and deep discrimination of character. He therefore has been always a waverer, imitating by turns Tieck, Hoffmann, Walter Scott, and the polished style of

[6] Willibald Alexis (Wilhelm Haering), born at Breslau, June, 1798; alive in Berlin: novels,—Walladmor and Schloss Avalon (published as Scott's); Cabanis; The House of Duesterwey; Twelve Nights; Wanderings in the South; Rosamond; Herr von Sacker; novels and tales, eight vols.

Goethe. Of late he has endeavoured to become popular by means of political allusions. But in this he savours too much of Berlin, so that his measured speeches and weak jests on liberalism make as little impression, as his Prussian patriotism awakens any glowing zeal.

If it can be said of any novelist, that he must be looked upon as the German Walter Scott, Spindler[7] is the man. To many he appeared uncultivated, yet all must confess, that no one surpassed him in richness of historical groups and figures, and in warmth and power of imagination. He is one of those rare productions of nature which belong to an earlier, ruder, and more glowing age, and yet, like a late blossoming flower, appear in our modern days. Among mountaineers, among the nobles who live remote from courts, (if any still do so), in some handicrafts, and especially among the Catholics, such natural productions of a former age still exist, but they are very rare in the world of literature. Spindler however, is one. To our courtly aristocracy of letters, which I will designate with the name of Schlegel, he will never appear a worthy member of their establishment[8]; they will never pardon him his rudeness of form, for they can value a powerful and even a wild pencil in the province of painting only; the works of fiction, on the contrary,

[7] C. Spindler: novels,—The Jew; The Invalid; The Nun of Gnadenzell; The Jesuit; Moss-Roses: The Natural Son; &c., &c., &c.

[8] *Stiftsfähig.* One who was eligible to the office of the canon of a chapter—with sixteen quarters on his shield.

they wish to see polished like those of Van der Werf, and they cannot pardon a man for having dust upon his shoes, even though he had travelled from the far distant land of romanticism. The reading public, on the contrary, however fond they may be of Spindler's works, cannot pay homage to his true charms; they, therefore, are more pleased with the faulty portions than with the tender traits of true poetry, which smile upon us out of his works, strange and wonderful as the countenance of an angel out of the noise and throng of a foolish feast, or out of the dark obscurity of a murder hole. In what kind of the historical novel do we find this unassuming charm of an unconscious beauty, amidst descriptions which do not lead us to expect its presence? I am acquainted with many classical, philosophical, and polished novels, especially English ones, but in none of them do I find this savage yet beautiful splendour of single descriptions, and this sweet foreign charm of little traits, which gain the heart. Never, it is plain, never will the moving figure, whose look sometimes chains so wonderfully, step forth from the picture; it soon vanishes behind variegated and, as it were, noisy pictures, which awaken no melancholy within us. But is not this the truest charm of poetry? I should value Spindler less if he made more use of his gift, if he described beauties which he only hints at.

Bechstein bears a great resemblance to Spindler in poetical warmth; but this amiable poet is also distinguished as a lyric poet by the magic euphony of his verses, and by the noblest feelings, as, for

example, in his poem Luther. Like Van der Velde, he chooses popular legends as the subjects of his novels, and series of romantic ballads.

Storch[9] is as rich in figures as Spindler, but there are in him vulgarities which are never seemly. The fruitful novelist Belani also errs in this way.

While these authors incline to romantic extravagancies, others have paid particular attention to the truth of history and fidelity of costume. Of this kind is Tromlitz[1]. The majority of his novels have their scenes laid during the era of the Reformation, and of the thirty years' war, a kind of description in which he is most successful. He is the Wouvermann of poetry, the painter of battles and horses, of the warlike dress of the Walloons and Spaniards; in short, all things of this kind he describes in capital style. The style of his dialogue, in which he imitates the modern sweetness of Fouqué and Lafontaine, is a strange contrast to the pictures of a rude and uncivilized age. The dear sweet girls, clothed in old French caps, and with a great bunch of keys at their girdles, talk as foolishly and old-fashionedly as if they had been educated at a modern boarding-school, and the sunburnt partisans of the thirty years' war, who did not spare the child even when

[9] Ludwig Storch: novels,—The Freebooters; Heideschenke; Irish Popular Tales; Tales for Day and Night, &c.

[1] A. von Tromlitz, a pseudonyme (Carl August Friedrich von Witzleben), born November 23rd, 1773; alive in Dresden, colonel in the Saxon army; The Pappenheimers; Mutius Sforza; Siege of Candy. (73 vols. 1826—1834.)

[2] Philipp Wilhelm Georg August Blumenhagen, born at Hanover, 1781; alive there: plays; novels and tales.

in its mother's womb, simper like the magazine-writing lieutenants of our residences.

Blumenhagen[2] is closely allied to Tromlitz. He, too, both receives and affords most pleasure in describing scenes of the era of the Reformation. He was a capital hand at painting the old chargers, steel-caps, and whiskers; then bürgermasters with their fur coats and black barret-caps; the pious daughters with their silver-clasped prayer books; and in doing so he conscientiously adheres to the stiff and grave tone of the age. He is less at home in his pictures of modern times. We should probably think more of him did he not write so coarsely, so much, and so patriotically. He ought to have confined himself to a smaller number of representations, which, however, ought to have been wrought out with assiduity and care, instead of every year filling the annuals with new novels. And he ought, in as far as relates to his Brunswick patriotism, to consider, that if we eat Brunswick sausages every day, we shall, at least, spoil our stomachs.

Brönikowsky[3] showed much talent in describing scenes from the ancient history of Poland, Russia, and Hungary.

Harro Harring[4], however, has made a far deeper

[3] Alex. August Ferdinand von Opel-Bronikowsky, born at Dresden, February 28th, 1783; died January 21st, 1834: novels,—Hippolyt Boratinski; History of Poland; The Magyaren, &c. (49 vols.)

[4] Paul Harro Harring, born at Ibenshof, in Friesland, August 28th, 1798; alive, an exile in Britain: poems; Travels of a Frisian in Denmark, Germany, &c.; The Pole; political pamphlets.

impression on the public, by his few but vivid descriptions of the misfortunes of the Polish nation. He was himself one of Constantine's guard at Warsaw; so that he tells what he saw. This interesting young Frieslander wandered about in the world for a long time, calling himself a sentimental Don Juan, and Werterizing until he exchanged the longings of love for those of freedom. His descriptions are manly; so that his Poles will affect generations yet to come.

Rellstab[5], also, sketched pictures of the present and the past,—the Russian campaign of 1812, and the conquest of Algiers in 1830. He wrote in a pleasing style, but the deep shades of passion are wanting.

Wolff[6] penetrates deeper into the passions of history. His Vittoria, and still more his Mirabeau, show us the torments of the Revolution. Yet he shows no less talent for fabulous and even for idyllic quiet life in his minor tales.

The poets of the aristocracy, Tieck and Steffens, have, within these few years, been joined by the Baron Sternberg[7] with historical novels, in which certain questions of literature, or of the feelings,

[5] Rellstab; alive at Berlin; editor of Voss's Gazette: dramas,—The Venetians; Eugene Aram; Sentimental Journey; novels,—The Poacher, &c.

[6] O. L. B. Wolff; alive, professor in Jena: Collection of Popular Ballads; Poems of the Germans; History of the Jongleurs; author of the Sketch of German Literature which appeared in the Athenæum about five years ago.

[7] A. von Sternberg; alive: The Maltese Tragedy; Lessing; Edward; novels,—Palmyra Fortunatus; The Torn Asunder (*Die Zerrissener*). See Foreign Quarterly Review.

are discussed as they would be in a company of educated ladies.

Among the affectations of the literature of the historical novel, must be reckoned the works of the great censor Rehfues[8], whose Italian and Oriental pictures are like parrots, truly splendid and precious, but they fill the eye and ear without gladdening the soul.

Leopold Schefer[9], who, as it seems, cannot find out proper forms, possesses much genuine talent. The romantic denouements in which he takes such pleasure do not suit his talents, which are far more fitted to describe the internal condition and tender pictures of the life of the soul.

It is difficult to say, what Hauff[1] would have become. He began by imitating Clauren; this he left off at my advice, and changed it into a persiflage of the same author, which was very successful. He also wrote Stories for Children, Memoirs of the Devil, an historical novel, in the style of the middle ages, and many other miscellaneous works, in as easy and graceful a style as that in which Willibald Alexis writes. But he died young. Another prematurely blighted flower was the unfortunate Lessmann[2], who wrote

[8] Philip Joseph von Rehfues, born at Tubinger, October 2nd, 1779: Italy; Spain; Siege of Castle of Gozzo; novels,—Scipio Cicala; Last of the Assassins.

[9] Leopold Schefer, born at Muskau, in Lusatia, July 30th, 1784: poems, with music, edited by Prince Pückler-Muskau; novels,—Laienbrevier; Lyric Poems.

[1] Wilhelm Hauff, born at Stuttgart, November 29th, 1802; died November 18th, 1827: Märchen; Memoirs of the Devil; Man in the Moon; Lichtenstein, &c. (36 vols.)

[2] Daniel Lessmann, born at Soldin, in Neumark, January

Italian and Provençal stories, and Sketches of Travel, but who at last committed suicide. Georg Döring [3], who likewise died young, did not show any decided signs of talent; neither, with all his enormous fertility in writing romantic and modern novels, did he display any originality. Gustav von Heeringen [4], has lately written some good historical tales; but he has also composed some longer novels which are not so good.

Lewald [5] has also written several historical novels and tales, which, though they display much imagination, possess too little originality; but the greater is the talent of this author for minute descriptions of real life, as his descriptions of Paris and the Tyrol show,—tableaux, which are of more value than the romantic inventions which we find in the works of past ages. The anonymous author of Pictures of Life in America, has talents of the same kind [6]. He seems to be a Ger-

18th, 1794; died September 2nd, 1831: Louisa von Halling; Letters from Spain; poems; novels,—Heidenmühle, &c.

[3] Georg Christian Wilhelm Asmus Döring, born at Cassel, December 11th, 1789; died October 10th, 1833: novels,—Roland of Bremen; Shepherd's War; Fantasy-pieces; dramas,—Cervantes; Gellert, &c.; operas.

[4] Gustav von Heeringen; alive; Tour to Portugal; Love-charm; Mother Ann, &c.

[5] Johann August Lewald, born at Konigsberg, October 14th, 1793; Aquarelle aus dem Leben; The Grandfather; The Tyrol; Graf Louzinski; Gorgona; editor of the Europa of Stuttgart.

[6] He is an American, of the name of Sarsfield, and is, or was lately resident in Zurich. He has also published Transatlantic Sketches, and The Legitimists; I believe we may hope to have them in English from his own pen.

man, though he writes like Cooper or Washington Irving.

Hitherto we have seen the influence of Walter Scott. In addition to him, the genial lord Byron exercised no less influence over German poetry; yet he formed no real school. His adherents and imitators either attached themselves to other schools, to the romantic one, to that of Callot-Hoffmann, or to the political one; or they passed over to the new Gallomania.

Byron was too great a man, and his sorrow was too genuine for the attempts of youths to imitate him ever to be successful. Wherever a genuine sorrow at the state of the age really existed among us, it required no foreign style to express it. The coquetry of despair, however, found a far more fertile field in the imitation of the modern French romanticism, which saved the Germans the trouble of affecting the air of the noble Briton.

Yet it cannot be denied that Byron supported by his countenance the modern "literature of despair." His motives were noble; he was truly a martyr for poetry; yet his divine madness had no other foundation, but that of the experience that everything beautiful in the world, gives way before the superior power of the base and vulgar. But his scepticism, his contempt of the world, were adopted only by these very base and vulgar people, whom he so cordially hated; and they were used by them as a weapon against the Beautiful, for the sake of which he fell into his poetical despair.

The poor lord was a Titan, who could not be made to comprehend that the earth was intended for pigmies. Prometheus brought them fire from heaven, but they can do nothing with it but boil their soup. Though an error, it is the error of a noble mind, to desire that reality should correspond with the exalted ideal of fancy,—an error which is so closely allied to greatness, that it would be impossible to comfort a Byron for the sorrow which he feels in consequence of the contrast between reality and the pictures of his fancy. Byron, filled with enthusiasm for every thing poetical in reality, saw poetry ignominiously vanquished, trodden in the dust, and destroyed by the common-placeness of his age. Mankind arose from the gouty weakness and philistinism of last century, to ideas and deeds of wondrous excellence; poetry, dressed in full armour, rode on a white palfrey over the earth, the nations following her as if enchanted. Byron saw her when a boy; but he soon saw her reel and fall; he saw the charm vanish, and the pale shadow of a coarse philistinism again following the flying light over the whole world. And Byron saw his own countrymen most active in promoting this reaction of prose, and his patriotism shuddered at the sight. He sought in nature what he could not find in history. But even on the seashore, and on the beautiful coasts, where he expected to find uncorrupted nations and the simplicity of by-gone ages, he saw nothing but the victory of politics over everything distinguished for its greatness, nobleness, or innocence; and he always found that it

was his own countrymen who were the destroyers of poetry.

Yet the antipathy to the vulgar and ugly in the history of the age would not give us a sufficient view of Byron's poetical character. Byron is not a spirit of light so pure that no blame affected him, when he burst forth in the most fiery indignation at rights being injured and honour disgraced. He possesses, in addition to this heroism, which may be called holy, something very unholy. In the moments of apathy, for example, which followed those holy elevations of the genius of the poet, Byron, giving himself up to all the weakness of his human nature, exceeded its follies in a convulsive manner, so that he often appeared bestial, or even, at times, diabolical. In his Don Juan he often pursues a course of ideas exceedingly low and degrading to his genius, by allowing it to pander to the basest appetites. In several of his most gloomy night-pieces, on the other hand, he stretches, as in a disturbed dream, the shadow which lies on his mind, or on his *environment*, like a mantle of death over the whole world; and pours forth fancies of the blackest kind, in which he, if we may so speak, flirts a little too much with the devil.

But we cannot separate Byron's light from his dark side; and we ought therefore to understand, that such a man must be taken as he is, without our carping at him. Even his blame-worthy features are nothing but the completion of, and the foil to, his noble qualities. The most beautiful pictures in the world are not those of China, which have

no perspective, but, as an enthusiast rightly said, they must make a black mark on the white wall.

There is a certain affinity between Byron and Goethe, the two greatest poets of their age. Both contended in a certain godlike epicurism, peculiar to the poet alone, for fortune, for the complete possession of the Beautiful, for the highest enjoyment of worldly love. Goethe, who was well acquainted with the tricks of the goddess Fortune, was satisfied with a wise and selfish moderation. Byron abused Fortune, who had given him less satisfaction, the more she offered it to him; so that, even though he had been in full possession of all earthly beauty, he would have been in despair, for his noble heart desired that the whole world should renounce vulgarity and misery; for he would not have cared for heaven, had he known that hell was near him. With Goethe, therefore, everything relates to the security of a limited enjoyment; with Byron, on the contrary, everything relates to the despair which seeks a lost paradise.

Byron cannot be satisfied with any substitute of fortune, with any illusion, with anything transitory. In his longing glow there is a truth, which again destroys in its flames the fairest self-created images; and religion, the quiet tarrying for the beyond, does nothing but awaken a savage laugh, for fire admits of no superior, and no rest.

It would be very difficult to find out the real imitators of Byron in our German poetry, because many have adopted only single features of him; and those who seem to stand nearest him, again fall away into other schools. The young Wai-

blinger was the first who conceived the idea of copying him, of writing fiery songs for the Greeks, and bold fancies, which intermingled pleasure, unbelief, despair, and murder, and of giving himself up to a savage though genial cynicism, to which he unfortunately became a martyr by an early death.

As a dramatic poet Grabbe[7] showed the greatest Byronic boldness, endeavouring, in his Don Juan and Faust, to excel everything written in this style. It was a strange thought to bring Don Juan and Faust into one poem. These two heroes may, in a certain sense, be called the highest ideas of tragic poetry, in so far as they denote the two extremes of manly power, Don Juan the highest power of body, Faust the highest of mind. One such idea is enough to exhaust the mind of the greatest poet; yet in this work a poet ventures to combine them, to inclose together the Dioscuri of manliness, like two Nemean lions, and let the one become a Hercules by triumphing over the other. What could they do but rend each other? Like the devil himself, he seizes the two heroes right and left, and crashes their heads on each other's like nuts. One would be inclined to think, that, in them, the poet had wished to destroy poetry; that he had, like Sampson, seized the two supporting pillars of modern tragedy, in order to crush it to atoms.

[7] Dietrich Christian Grabbe, born Dec. 11th, 1801; died at Detmold, Sept. 12th, 1836: Dramatic Imaginings; Don Juan and Faust; The Hohenstauffen, a cycle of tragedies (vol. i. Fred. Barbarossa; vol. ii. Heinrich VI.); Napoleon, or the Hundred Days.

The poetry of the one evidently destroys and annihilates that of the other. Goethe's Faust and Mozart's Don Juan have each a beautiful tinge, peculiar to itself; but they give a disagreeable reflection when they are opposed to each other. Each aims at an illusion of its own, and each destroys that of the other.

It is an old and well-known excellent custom of the gardener, not to plant trees too close together, and of the poet, always to give the whole stage to one great hero alone, to-morrow to another, but never to allow a Cæsar and a Napoleon to enter at the same time. But our age can no longer keep within the bounds of moderation. It puts on strength at every opportunity, in order to surpass itself. But it only destroys the effect by doubling it. When it exaggerates the terrible, it becomes a mere caricature.

Grabbe is more moderate in his historical dramas, which merit admiration for the strength and pithiness of expression in which the rich deep life of the century is compressed into one clear picture, as is particularly the case in the Hohenstauffen and Napoleon.

Zedlitz, who has already been mentioned, reminds us, in his Garlands of the Dead (*Todtenkränzen*), of Byron's sublime lamentations. Byron has indisputably contributed to render the tragic fate of Napoleon an object of warm sympathy with German poets, and a poem by Zedlitz (of the trumpeter who shall awaken the dead armies of Napoleon), has, in a French translation, become a favourite song of the people. What a triumph

of humanity, were this of any service; where the national interests could be reconciled by this means; were every future hostility to give way to this! The Freiherr von Gaudy[8] has sung Napoleon's praise under the title of Imperial Songs (*Kaiserlieder*), and under the title of Heraldic Legends (*Schildsagen*), he has given a poetical interpretation of the escutcheon of the German nobles, as if the renown of the Corsican advocate's son, and of the German nobles, were not as diametrically opposed as revolution and restoration.

Freiligrath[9], who writes in a style which fluctuates between that of Byron and the noble Pole, Mickiewicz, has lately published a few poems of such high beauty, as to lead us to expect great things from this deep-feeling mind, this spirit

[8] Franz Bernhard Heinrich Wilhelm, Freiherr von Gaudy (descended of a Scotch family), born at Frankfort on the Oder, April 19th, 1800: My trip to Rome; Passages from the Diary of a Journeyman Tailor; edites the Musenalmanach; Thoughts of a Fugitive from the Cholera; Desengano; Venetian novels.

[9] Ferdinand Freiligrath, alive: poems.

"In Freiligrath, too, we find expressed a discontent with the present, with himself, and his *environment*. He flies on the Arab steed of his wild and raging fancy to the East, to the Arabian deserts, where the ghosts of those who have perished there whirl in airy circles around him; or to the interior of Africa, where the lion hurries on his thundering career, mounted on back of the giraffe.

"Freiligrath's lyric style, though akin to that of Victor Hugo, carried us away by the charms of its novelty; the fantastic descriptions, the venturous rhymes, the strange intermixture of foreign people, countries, dresses, plants, and animals, gained for him, even before he published a collected edition of his poems, a great fame; carried away by the gorgeous outward

which can sway the realm of imagination and of language.

Though the noble qualities of Lord Byron have exercised some influence upon us, yet his dark sides have also cast their shade over our literature. Since he, despairing of good, gave himself up to wild excesses, everything that he wrote in those evil hours which favour unbelief, must serve as a pretext to the worst passions of our days. These passions began to ferment in the French literature, so that the noble Byronian soon assumed with us the form of the modern French sansculottism.

THE NEW GALLOMANIA.

Once upon a time, France governed all the rest of Europe, then in a somewhat rude state, by the refined elegance of her customs. But as she stretched her prerogative too far, a reaction, as might have been expected, took place. Those barbarous customs which had been driven back to the uttermost limits of Europe again appeared in Paris. Since that time, courtesy and sansculottism have kept up a constant struggle in Paris. Each has maintained its separate position, and between the two have been formed middle classes, jacobin courtiers, and elegant sansculottes.

splendour of his poems, we never remarked that he was poor in ideas and thoughts, and that the descriptions which he gives are all borrowed from various quarters."—Conv. Lex. der Gegen.

The two literary parties agree in but one trait, truly French,—in *ésprit*. Everything they write must be clever, piquant, and such as either flatters the ruling fashion of the day or surprises by its novelty. The meaning, the truth of anything, must always be sacrificed to the applause expected from the hearers. Everything must be calculated not to exhaust the object, but to make the public enthusiastic.

As we Germans have always fallen into the other extreme, too often neglecting, in consequence of the profoundness with which we endeavour to make ourselves masters of everything, the clear and pleasing style which we owe to our readers, the example of the French is very instructive to us, and it is very praiseworthy in us to imitate it to a certain extent; that is, in so far as it is suited to the truth and profoundness of the subject on which we are engaged.

Of the two French parties, the *elegant* deserves to be specially acknowledged by us. The learned pride, which wilfully exaggerates the barbarous language of its scholasticism, founds upon it an aristocratic privilege, and denies the popularity of every sacrifice, of every opponent; it has, however, of late years, been united with *belletristical* cynicism and the rudeness of political passions. In contrast to this wildness, we may hold fast by the politeness of better society; for it cannot be denied that its graces still, as formerly, dwell in Paris. It wishes to see the strife carried on with the courtesy of a Plato, not with the coarseness of a Luther.

Elegance is a part of the character of the French, therefore it has survived the storms of the Revolution; while an immense political and social experience, and the amelioration of the prostrate aristocracy, by an infusion of talent from the lower ranks, has only had the effect of rendering it, like a true jewel, more brilliant. The ancient nobility have laid aside more of their prejudices than of their social amiableness, and the upstarts have rendered their sway secure only in so far as they have sacrificed to the social graces, without which a man would, in Paris, only lose his head, like Robespierre, with very little chance of placing a crown upon it, or can govern for a time only a *porte-feuille*, a *tribune*, or a *coterie*.

The French politeness of an older date had already found its way into Germany; yet since the days of Wieland and Thümmel little has been said on this subject. The luxuriance of materials for science, the richness of spirit, the enthusiasm of feeling, the overflowing imagination, romanticism, and, above all, political hatred to France, took away all our liking for those old, smooth, and polished French forms. But I have already shown how the Restoration by degrees again reconciled us with France. Our political literature has again been tuned to the French key. How was it possible that that quality which we must truly honour and value in the French, their politeness, could remain without any influence upon us?

This French elegance has always been common among the higher circles of society, in which the French language was spoken. A class of citizens

rich in money and intellect did not, as in France, force itself into these high circles in Germany; but in consequence of the partitioning and mediatizing of the ancient families of the second rank, were separated further than before from those of the first, while the general body of the other subjects or citizens of the empire were joined to them by closer ties. We cannot, therefore, be surprised that the feeling of past greatness should be shown in some princely poet, in that truly romantic way in which it appears in Stollberg's youthful poems. We can be still less surprised that this feeling is expressed in a talented resignation, in an amiable philosophy of life, and in the pride by means of which Frederick the Great could boast, that he would have become a great man even though he had not been a king.

Prince Pückler Muskau combines with an inborn elegance the most refined acquaintance with all the tendencies of the age, which have removed him from the life of an obscure aristocrat to a noble position, which however is, in the strictest sense, only that of a citizen; a position, from the novelty of which he can extract every charm. He has retained nothing of his rank but the comforts, the refined Epicurism, the noble customs; and though he sometimes thinks of his "supporters[1]," yet it is not fair to reproach him with this, for all his literary efforts are rather a concession made by the high aristocracy than a claim of the spirit of the age. He is a phenomenon, which never

[1] *Wappenvögel.* His supporters, the royal Prussian eagles.

could have existed had it not been for the revolutions of the century, and in particular for those of France. He is a beam cast from France to Germany, so that he bears the same relation to France, now become bourgeoise, that Frederick the Great did to it when it became philosophical.

This is the reason that the prince is, like Frederick, French in his forms. No author has expressed himself so Frenchly in the German language. It is not alone the mere memoir tone, it is the conversational tone, which is still more piquant, and seasoned with all the graces both of openness and coquetry. The endeavour to appear always profitable and amiable without awakening envy, to assume without wounding, to flatter without derogating from our own dignity,—this first rule of French society, is, with Puckler, the most important of all. Though he often, especially in his noble work on England, dwells on the thought how the aristocracy have been gradually thrust back from political life, yet he himself proves how the better elements of aristocracy have always been called on to preserve their sway in society. The aristocracy of noble customs can never be uprooted, for it will always build upon the ruins of society. Mere riches will always confer privileges; so that it is not the least merit of the works of Prince Puckler that they teach so many rich men how to act and enjoy with taste, and in their own enjoyment to pay to the commonweal at least the tribute of beauty.

Contrasted with this cheerful and lively prince, there is a dark republican, in whom the spirit of

the French Revolution still lives, and whose cynicism, though as different as possible from the elegance of the prince, is likewise of French origin.

In Frankfort-on-the-Maine, where the great Goethe was nursed up as a patrician child, there was born a puny sickly child, the Jew Baruch. The boy was even in his youth hooted by the Christian children. He daily saw at the Saxon bridge, the disgraceful statue which represents a Jew, grouped in a most disgusting manner with a sow. The curse of his people sat heavily upon his soul. When he set out to travel, the officer contemptuously wrote in his passport, "*Juif de Frankfort.*" "Am I not a man like the rest of you?" he exclaimed; "Has not God endowed my mind with every power, and yet ye dare to despise me? I will be avenged in the noblest way; I will assist you to fight for freedom." He became a Christian, he took the name of Börne[2], he joined the German patriots, he burned and wrote for German freedom. Görres contributed articles to his Balance (*Waage*).

But this ebullition was altogether misapprehended. In Börne, men continued to see only the Jew; and they upbraided him with this the more assiduously the more he wished to become a patriot. Even patriotism itself took at last such a sorry way of venting itself, that Börne looked fruitlessly after it, smiling bitterly.

[2] Ludwig Börne, born at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, 1784; died at Paris, 1837; The Balance; Letters from Paris; New Letters from Paris; &c.

From this moment he either gave up his German sympathies or changed them into antipathies, leaning more and more to the principles of the French Revolution, which have been again brought forward by the revolutionary party, especially since 1830. He fancied that the Germans were not ripe for freedom, that they were naturally too phlegmatic and servile ever to progress. In general it depends not upon the freedom of a nation, but on that of all mankind, that the hatred of nations, the effects of which he, as a Jew, felt so severely, is the greatest check to the acknowledgment of the universal rights of man. Yet he fancied that to the French must be accorded the preference, because they, being furthest forward in the work of emancipation, must give the impulse to all other nations. He now (1836) sits in Paris like a political Timon, vexed that the French have no sympathy with his ideas.

Börne's wit is like that of Rabelais or Aristophanes,—perfectly annihilating. In one point only has he failed,—in scorning errors as much as vices, and in making no allowances for the slow and gradual progress of development. In this way he often offended the most honest men, and injured the cause of gradual development. A terrorism of words without the energy of deeds, a Faust in a sack, an impatient and irritable person upon a wooden horse, which will never advance, has, in the end, a totally different effect. If Börne had not expressed wishes, if he had not given himself up to illusions and hopes, if he had not always been an haranguer and alarmist, if he

had not always mocked the world as it once was, without desiring anything better of it, his sarcasm would have appeared more magnanimous and magical. Yet I think that his faith, which has been so often deceived, and his blind wrath, are more in accordance with his favours. He possesses deep feelings, which early led him to become an ardent admirer of Jean Paul, and which have oftener than once filled him with the noblest enthusiasm for his country and universal freedom. These deep feelings were constantly wounded and injured by unmerited hatred, by unworthy ill-treatment, and by the ever-returning consciousness of having been deceived. Then they boiled up in hatred, which streamed forth like the crater of Vesuvius. Yet when the wild fire went out at the sight of day, we always saw the pleasant vineyard and the blue sea, lying resting as in the calmest peace at the feet of the volcano. What a beautiful landscape, yet what a hell under it! What poetry, and what passions!

Natural irritability, long ill health, and a life full of disagreeable emotions, have called forth this bitter fire in Börne's soul. Nobody can read Börne without being charmed by his unbroken flow of amiable and inexhaustible wit; yet the feelings which it produces are mournful. The charming and ever-changing arabesques of his flowers are only the hieroglyphics of the deepest sorrow. The mother of this juggling jesting is Melancholy, which eyes with a bitter smile her games, apparently despising the scorn as much as its object.

Yet no author laid bare with such an unsparing hand and with such acuteness, or persecuted with such implacable hatred, the follies and foibles of his age. Börne is not unjust; he does not see a matter in too black a light; but in consequence of his always elevating the dark side, and always hunting after stupidity and evil, we do not find in his writings any counterpoise. A laboratory in which all the poisons of nature are assembled, is not nature. Jean Paul never gave us the thorn without the rose: Börne weaves chaplets and garlands out of pure thorns. Görres bears a close affinity to Börne in his withering political wit; but the horse of death is yoked with the horse of joyous life to the fiery chariot of this true prophet of modern times. Börne sends death on his pale horse, trotting through Germany, covers his dry bones with the party-coloured garb of Harlequin, places the fool's bauble on his naked skull, and gives him the scythe in his bony hand for a whip. This is wit in a king's dress; being now master, it no longer serves good-natured whims or punishing earnestness,—the malicious joy, which, for its own purposes and its own pleasure, hews down everything.

Wit makes nothing great or entire; it destroys only the great and entire. All Börne's writings are, therefore, nothing but reviews, fragments, aphorisms. He does not show us an army on parade, but a field of battle, upon which we can, amidst the heaps of slain, only see where the living formerly stood. Here the poor German and French poets lie with their crushed lyres and

their pierced hearts. There the players without arms or legs. In one place the German scholars, of whom we do not know whether they are asleep or dead. In another, the patriots of 1813, without their heads. In a third, the thick Philistines, with their paunches hewn away. All around are voids caused by the censorship, like ditches, Gruithuisen's telescopes like spiked cannons, pens like guns, doctors' hats like grenadiers' caps, old newspapers like cartridges.

In the Letters from Paris, the carnage is even worse. There, all sorts of patriots, cabinets, assemblies, journalists, &c., lie confusedly intermingled; so that the whole of Europe is, as it were, a wide battle-field, where, when all are dead, a legion of hyænas is let loose upon the dead bodies, again to satisfy their unextinguished revenge.

But, as is the case with the mental polemics of the French journals, Börne's wit is chiefly momentary,—suited for to-day and to-morrow, but unintelligible the next day. Political wit is like lightning, it flashes and is gone. He who does not see it cannot be struck by it; he cannot be preserved by it. It is gone as soon as it appears. Of what use is the cold aurora borealis, which appears to us to be the thundering sky of the glowing summer? It never makes the leaves of a tree rustle. The icicles hang quietly from the dry branches.

The excited state, which decompounded our German phlegm into enthusiasm and wit, has now ceased. It was an unwonted, and, though wont may become a second nature, an unnatural over-

excitement. The ardour of enthusiasm first left the heart and took possession of the head, where it lightened for awhile, until it became completely cool. I think that this was very natural, for an over-excitement can never last long. The relaxation which follows after it, is perhaps accompanied with too much stupidity and coldness; but is this, on the whole, to be lamented? No! the present quietness is perfectly suited to the German temperament; the Germans find themselves quite at home in it. Though Börne calls it a sleep, yet it is a sound sleep; and he is well, who sleeps soundly. I may term it the sleep of a plant,—a still and prosperous growing. This holds good of our physical as well as our mental condition. Upon the whole, our external well-being has improved, and an immense number of the abuses of past ages have been done away with. Literature, too, proves that we are making advances in mental culture, and that the last ten years, dim as they may appear when compared with the preceding ten, are really far richer in the germs of power and progress. We ought never to measure any condition of man by the sublime standard of the ideal: of all tyrannies, men submit least patiently to that of reason. We desired too much at once, now we improve the little which we really have, and this is the only sure way of bettering ourselves. It is a very good sign that we, while engaged in our present unassuming and proper labour, can no longer comprehend or suffer the "conscious unhappiness" of the old enthusiasts, even though we should be charged with a servile

patience still more stubborn. Börne, with all his hatred for what is old, has too little love for what is young: his imagination plunges too deep into the corruption of the past, and he pays too little attention to the young green sprouts which are springing up under the corrupt and rotten surface of the old marsh.

Nothing but destruction can proceed from the feeling of uncomfortableness and from mockery; that which man intends to unfold sound and healthy, in physical as well as mental life, must proceed from a feeling of comfort and from sympathy. Mockery itself has a meaning and value only in so far, as that where it pulls down, love and care again build up something better. This really takes place. If we compare our present condition with that in which we were before the dissolution of the empire, we cannot but see that we have, in a short time, progressed a great way. We need but compare to be convinced. I need not recapitulate one by one the commercial, scientific, and even political advantages which we now enjoy. Let it suffice to show that we enjoy the invaluable advantage of advanced age, of having passed through a crowd of follies, and of having become more prudent by means of the age itself. This improvement of the Germans, *en masse*, cannot be denied, despite of many old follies of single schools and parties. I believe that prudence does not come when stupidity is seen into, but that it makes its appearance when it is borne with patience; and for this purpose, man requires a pause for consideration, a period for

healing up. As long as men are vexed that they have not been more prudent, so long they are not prudent. I therefore believe that in ten years we have become more prudent, or prudent for the first time, whilst ten years ago we rashly thought that we were so even then. We are now in that considerable pause: well then, we pause; but this pause is of meaning in music; the composer of world-history must here make the sign to pause. The stillness in which the German life has now been sunk, is certainly a sign of its internal fertility; I therefore prefer comparing it to the quiet health of a young wife, than to the brutal dormant sleep of a bear,—the comparison which Börne makes. It is not a feature of the age to sink into a cowardly and malicious lethargy; modest activity in every branch of practical and scientific life may rejoice in its uninterrupted and prosperous efficiency. Activity and cheerfulness, which have always remained not only true to us but have become even more lively, reassure and comfort us more than gloomy complaints and dissatisfaction with everything can rob us of.

Börne flees the hated presence of the Germans, and feels himself young and a denizen of the Present, only when among the French. He would be a happy, good-humoured, amiable Frenchman, were he not a German; he would be a cheerful Laertes, were he not the pensive Hamlet. But he who is pursued by care, whom it never leaves, as Horace[3] maintains, with him it places itself upon the cabriolet of the carriage, and

[3] Post equitem sedet—et atra cura.—Horace, Carm. iii. 1.

travels with him over the Rhine. Even amidst the merry Parisians, Börne cannot rid himself of that unfortunate talent of German penetration, which loads him with torments, and can never retain that peculiar sharp judgment, which, piercing through all hypocrisy, yet never finding the truth, always ends with burying the steel in its own bleeding heart.

As the scorpion when enraged, stings itself to death, poor Börne has at last begun to write French, and to take payment for reviling the Germans to a French public. This is a mournful moral suicide.

Heine[4] is almost always named along with Börne, because he too is or was a Jew; because he likewise lives in Paris, in voluntary exile; because he likewise darts forth sarcasms against Germany; and because he too writes very witty prose. Yet, notwithstanding all this external resemblance, he is very different from Börne, nay, he is to a certain extent his very opposite. Börne feels deeply, glowingly, and sorrowfully; with Heine, all is mere toying and affectation. Börne often raises the Cyclopean hammer of his heavy wrath to crush a fly, while Heine, on the contrary, takes the most important and sacred object into his mouth with as much levity as if it were a cigar.

Heine has some advantages over Börne. He is not only a humorist in prose, but also, as a

[4] Heinrich Heine, born at Düsseldorf, 1797; alive in Paris: poems; Pictures of Travel; Almanser and Radcliff; Contributions to the History of Modern Belles Lettres in Germany; The Saloon; State of France.

lyric poet, the founder of a new school, by being the first to introduce irony into lyric poetry, and to unite the boldest frivolity, and the most biting wit, with the most effeminate sentimentalism. Though in doing so, he imitated lord Byron, and affected his sorrow, he was naturally far too frivolous, to be seriously compared to the great Briton. He jested with deep sorrow at the sufferings of the people, with dreamy enamoured diversion, with genial dissipation, with pleasure, with anti-Christian free-thinking,—but he only jested with them. He had no traces of Byron's deep earnestness, nor of his nobleness. He soon, however, gave offence by the Jewish feelings and tendencies which he showed. His vanity was so manysided that it passed through all the stages which lead to disgust. He cared not whether he elevated himself above all, or made himself the lowest of mankind. His highest pleasure was to move the reader by rousing his tenderest feelings, and then by some true knavery to terrify and offend him.

He unfortunately mixed himself up with politics. What clever youth would not have done this at a period so interesting! But Heine! Heine was not made for this! He was too much of a zephyr-like poet, not to be pulled down into a marsh by the leaden weight of politics.

He went to Paris. The Revolution of 1830 filled him with enthusiasm. He wrote The State of France, an historical picture, and his best prose work, in which he proved, beyond a doubt, that his talents were of a solid description. But the applause

which his work met with, seduced him more and more from the path of poetry to those of politics, criticism, history, and philosophy.

Yet he was not at ease with himself. The great fame which Börne enjoyed among the revolutionary youth annoyed him. He endeavoured to surpass him in political satires, so that for long both seemed to be striving which could say the most malicious and witty things about Germany. Heine, though perfectly master of form, did not possess the true innate energy of sarcasm,—the decided disposition. He endeavoured to supply the place of this by a system, of which Börne never thought. Börne respected religion and morality. This caused him to be a German Philistine in the midst of Paris, for he was in this way alone among those young men who were careless of all consequences. Whilst Börne maintained a proud and independent reserve, Heine entered all the more willingly into the new tendencies of the young, and boldly rejecting everything Börne esteemed holy, began to play one of the most prominent parts in the systematic conflict with religion, which had supplied the place of unsuccessful political *emeutes*.

The more dangerous and pernicious this part was, the more weight must we allow to Heine's excuse,—that he looked upon it with the eyes of a poet, that it therefore possessed in his eyes every charm of a poetical illusion. The overthrow of Christianity appeared to him an action of as sublime grandeur, as the burning of the city of Rome was in the eyes of Nero; but he was silly

enough to stir the fire himself. For the sake of this poetical pleasure, he hazarded everything that is sacred in the eyes of man. He thought, no doubt, that this poetical excuse would, if matters turned out well, be accepted; but he took no less trouble to assume, in presence of his party, a serious mien and the dignity of the teacher, so that if matters turned out well, he might, as he himself boasted, be looked upon as the new apostle of anti-Christianity.

So early as 1831, in his Supplement to the Pictures of Travel (*Reisebilder*), he attacked Christianity in the most unmeasured strain, calling it a miserable and bloody religion for criminals, and Christ, the Saviour of the world, a bleeding Jew, who has robbed the world of all its joys, and, which can never be sufficiently lamented, has destroyed the far more beautiful belief of ancient heathenism. But, in 1835, when he had perfected his system, he communicated it in the Saloon (*Der Salon*) in the form of a critical history of philosophy. Here he openly declares that Christianity has already been annihilated by philosophy, and it is now supported, only in appearance, by hypocrisy. Borrowing his poetical images from the notorious Guerre des Dieux of Parny, he describes the manner in which the whole garrison of heaven must be put to the sword, and immortality lie at its last gasp. No sensible man now believes in Christianity, nor even in the existence of a God. Neither is any one now moral. The difference between good and evil is nothing but the raving of Christianity. There is no such

thing as vice. Matter is divine; nature may do anything: it can never sin. The senses, too long enthralled by Christianity, must be completely emancipated. Matter is God, the enjoyments of sense are alone holy: sensual festivals must assume the place of Christian ones. The senses must, after an oppression of so long continuance, avenge themselves on Christianity by orgies and uninterrupted dissipation. St. Simonism must be further developed; its pedantry must be taken away, and it must be fitted for pleasure. All mankind must unite to form a republic of happy mortals, who shall no longer toil and starve, but eat tarts, drink sack, and enjoy themselves. Such is the new system of Heine. He does not tell us how ALL are to riot in this way,—how *all* are to have enough, and *none* go away empty.

In a second work on romanticism, he carries on the same thought through an improvised history of poetry; and, at the same time, comes forward as the founder of a sect, by announcing himself as the head of the literary party in Germany, which, under the name of *jeune Allemagne*, applauds him so highly, and the 'apostolic zeal' of which he praises.

These doctrines are the same as those which, shortly before the French Revolution, were inculcated by Holbach; and, during the Revolution, were introduced into practice by Anacharsis Clootz, Marat, Hebert, Chaumette, and the Parisian town council. It is well known that in 1793 they murdered the priests, plundered the

churches, declared that religion was a crime, and decreed "that there is no longer any God."

It is notorious that festivals of sensuality were solemnized, that matter was deified, &c.; but all these materialists soon laid their heads under the guillotine, and France washed clean her bloody hands. It was not till after the revolution of 1830, that men endeavoured to revive the old memorials of the Jacobins: then was found a German systematizer, a second Holbach, to teach the young French—and this was our Heine.

Young Paris, filled with fugitives from all countries, constituted itself as young Europe. Out of it proceeded, first, a young Italy,—and next, a young Germany. Young Italy attached itself in Silvio Pellico to De la Mannais, and the modern French puritanical party, which, following out the principles of the English revolution under Cromwell, endeavours to obtain freedom by means of religion. This party has lately declared in Switzerland that it will throw itself into the arms of religion. Young Germany, on the other hand, attached itself, through Heine, to the modern French freethinkers, who contend against religion, and still more against morality, against which they have proclaimed a war of extermination.

A number of young men, mostly out of Northern Germany, have united in a coterie to disseminate, in a systematic manner, the tenets of Heine throughout Germany. But as Heine had drawn them all from French sources, they went back to

these, and carefully collected all the poison which the sun of July had produced in the stagnation of the state of France, in order to contaminate and infect us with them.

Wienbarg[5] wrote his Æsthetical Expeditions and his Political Zodiac, in which he inculcated, in a political point of view, the French St. Simonism, as well as, in a religious point of view, the materialism of Heine,—the religion of the flesh, and projected a republic, in which all property was to be common; and the most refined sensual enjoyment was, under the title of a perfectly æsthetical life, to be looked upon as the high aim and end of our being. The Manifesto of Reason, by Clemens, sounded rather tamer, for, though he wished to attain the same end, he did not do so independent of all Christianity, but by the gradual undermining of Christianity.

Gutzkow[6] endeavoured to surpass Heine and Wienbarg, in not only calling Christ a fool and cheat,—the apostles, oxen and asses,—Christianity a hypocritical and oppressive institution; but even in refusing to know anything of any religion; and in openly maintaining that it would have been better had man never believed in a God; and, in conformity with these declarations, in rejecting all the laws and institutions of morality, modesty,

[5] Ludolf Wienbarg, alive : Æsthetischen Feldzüge; Politischen Thierkreis; Holland in 1831-32; Menzel and Young Germany; Modern Literature.

[6] Karl Gutzkow, alive in Hamburg : The Saloon; Nero; Wally; Blazedow and his Sons; Goethe, as he will be looked upon two centuries hence; Seraphina.

truth, marriage, &c. But as he was quite aware that, with such declarations, he could never become a favourite of the German nation, he endeavoured to work indirectly upon it, by taking as a model the literary philtres of the French. He endeavoured to produce an effect upon the political world by frivolous descriptions, copied out of French journals and memoirs, and upon the novel reading public by novels and plays. The modern French novels, for example, those of Sand (Madame Dudevant), go back to the atheistical and immoral tone of the old French novels, in which, as in Therése la Philosophe, and Justine, ou les Malheurs de la Vertu, every virtue is ridiculed, and every vice alone is represented as useful and charming. In imitation of these impure models, Gutzkow wrote his notorious novel Wally. On the other hand, the modern Romanticists in France, have adopted their love of the terrible from our school of Callot-Hoffmann, caricaturing it to suit their own taste, and uniting it with the wildness of the age of terror, which has again sprung up in our literature, and with which the young republicans take such pleasure in amusing themselves. At the head of this school stands Victor Hugo, in whose dramas we see the most horrible immorality—the most inhuman methods of thinking and acting—the most abandoned characters—and the most soul-harrowing situations, uninterruptedly alternating with immorality and murder, in finding sympathy with the public of the most corrupt of capitals. Imitating this model, Gutzkow wrote

his Nero. In Paris, exclusive coteries are powerful; and journalism is, in their hands, an almost invincible weapon. This model, too, Gutzkow followed; he organized a coterie; and not only endeavoured to found a grand German review in the interests of the French, but even gained a multitude of other papers, by holding up to the eyes of the editors friendly to those of the publishers, commercial advantages; and expressly inviting all young men in Germany to unite with him, guaranteeing to every one that he would cause him to be proclaimed in all the papers connected with him, as one of the aristocracy of literature. He then declared that, in execution of his office of critic, he would not review the work, but would characterize the author, hoping that in this way he would attract the greatest attention, and would quickly cast down all worthy men and prejudice before a mob, as he was wont to collect every public scandal. He hoped to be able to produce by these French instruments in Germany, where their working was new, a greater effect, and to supply by shamelessness, what he wanted in true talent and knowledge.

The coterie took the name of Young Germany *(das junge Deutschland)*, only, however, as an emanation from Young Europe, for they expressly declared that patriotism was nothing but 'an animal impulse of the blood,' that, therefore, a man must not devote himself to one nation, but to all mankind, which, however, was deduced from France; and that, therefore, all

national literature must be done away with, and a 'world literature' put in their place.

In Germany they were much applauded by some Jews, who had long before deified their Heine; then by many rationalists, who had endeavoured to undermine Christianity, and now looked on amazed, yet joyous, at the bold youth by whom they had been outrun in that tedious labour. The old P.[7] wrote a pamphlet for Gutzkow, but he had not the courage to give himself openly out as its author. The greyheaded theologian has all his life gnawed, like a little hare, at the tree of Christianity, yet without making much of his labour. Before his death, he saw the wild boar rushing in, making his advances, and digging about the tree without farther ceremony. Then he stood beside it and wept a tear of joy. But when the hunter came and struck down the black beast, the hare absconded, and secretly wrote upon a sheet of paper an apology for the swine.

The adherents of Goethe are also to blame in this affair. The immoral coterie had recourse to Goethe, thus showing how right I was in attacking his frivolous tendency. But even the more refined adherents of Goethe, who did not approve of the brutal instincts of the French *propaganda*, rejoiced in having thus gained new and stout allies. In this way Mundt[8], in Berlin, was

[7] Menzel here means Paulus, professor in Heidelberg, one of the leading neologians of the age.

[8] Theodore Mundt, alive: novels,—Der Delphin; Lebenswirren (Perplexities of Life); Madonne.

the mediator. Laube[9] is nothing but a weak imitator of Heine. I look upon his immoral tirades as the mere charlatanry of imitation. The other young Germans, who are mere nameless scribblers, need not be mentioned.

The Gallomania, even independent of this coterie, has taken root in our polite literature. The journalist Theodore Hell[1], brings the most abominable caricatures of the French criminal pieces upon our stage in miserable translations; and a certain Wilhelm Müller[2], (who must not be confounded with the dead lyric poet,) has lately begun, in novels *à la* Janin and Sand, to collect all the physical and mental tortures under the sun. An anonymous work, The Conspiracy in Berlin, paints pleasure as nakedly as that author does sorrows, so that it may serve as a proof how far this taste for the impure, which has been borrowed from the French, has already gone.

CRITICISM.

Criticism will be itself most bitterly criticized. Whether it be just or unjust, it always raises up enemies. Yet it is indispensable; and possesses

[9] Heinrich Laube, alive: novels,—Young Europe; Letter of Life; The Actress; Fortune; The Warriors.

[1] Theodore Hell, (K. G. T. Winkler): edited the Forget Me Not, 1823-34; comedies; Three Days of the Life of a Player.

[2] Wilhelm Müller: Des Bettlers Gabe (The Beggar's Gift).

great influence. It is a difficult, but a noble calling, to sanctify by a right use its oft-abused weapons.

The business of true criticism is as necessary as it is noble. As thought is propagated by reflection, so is literature by criticism. Every new book bases the right of its existence only upon the criticism of its predecessors. By the connecting links of criticism one rose grows and ripens after another; and men always fight with one hand and build with the other, as was done at the temple of Jerusalem.

Criticism, in as far as single sciences are concerned, is an integral part of literature itself. Critical reviews of the mass of our literature are therefore become necessary; and this necessity has very naturally annexed itself to that of literary advertising in general. Men liked to know what works had been published, and what was their value. Reviews were in this way annexed to the publisher's advertisement; and as the books were published periodically, they were also reviewed periodically, so that in this way critical literature became essentially periodical.

The periodical form, and the exclusive attention paid to new works, give this literature a certain onesidedness. It is in this way removed from true criticism, and given up to a mercantile interest. A multitude of new works are not worth criticizing, but they must be advertized, because they are on the bookshelves. A good work may happen to be ill-reviewed, or even passed over unnoticed, and if the moment be

once passed, if it be no longer new, no one thinks any more about it. The number and importance of the works forgotten in this way, or falsely judged, is so great, that Jean Paul was quite right in proposing a literary paper for arrears, which should be exclusively devoted to the rescue of literary works, in the style of Lessing. Men ought to see at once that criticism cannot be a mere annual fair, in which, amidst the crush, we must cry ourselves hoarse in praising our own wares, and crying down those of our neighbours. A worthless book of ten pages often becomes celebrated by the help of bribery, fashion, or accident; and just as often do we find good ones misapprehended, abused, and forgotten. Whatever is old is not in the plan; but must criticism be always connected with ephemeral interests? Fashion rules with an iron rod in the daily papers. That criticism, which, fixed on a firm basis, is intended to examine all the movements of literature, is itself carried away by its tendencies; for the same interest diffuses both reviews and books among the reading public, seeking purchasers for both.

Reviews themselves are often established either for honour's sake, or for the purposes of gain; in either case, reviewing is carried on like a trade. Universities often publish their periodicals only for the purpose of doing away with the reproach of inactivity and obscurity, and the book is filled, *ex officio*, in the best way they can. The majority of our other periodicals are undertaken by the publishers, and intended to make money; and

the reviewers here sit, just like manufacturers, and perform their task. This business-like way of criticizing produces an immense number of reviews, which it is impossible to survey. Manufactories of this sort are established in every corner of our land, and are taken care of by a number of hungry maws and weak heads, which write to-day what no one will read a year hence.

Critical periodicals may, in general, be divided into those on learning, and those on the *belles lettres;* the former being subdivided into the particular departments of theology, medicine, education, law, &c. The distinction between scholars and naturalists, alluded to in the beginning of this work, is even more striking in our critical literature, where, too, it is most pernicious. In criticism, at least, the spirit of the nation should raise itself above the internal differences and schisms in culture and opinions. Here the public should be made acquainted with the results of science—the scholar, with life and poetry. Criticism should ennoble everything in the eyes of every one. For this purpose it has been allotted an independent literature. The nation should see itself reflected in it as in a great mirror, and should learn to know and value all the workings of its spirit in one clear survey. We still, it is true, are in want of a public which can be interested for everything; here scholars, there æsthetical ladies, have not yet found the third element by which they may render themselves intelligible. What fashionable would read the learned notes in the literary

gazettes, and what scholar would read the æsthetic tattle in the belletristic papers? There should be a higher,—a national criticism,—which should supply neither these notes for the mere scholar, nor this tattle for women and beaux; but which should promote a popular esteem for all the intellectual works which have proceeded from, and are of importance to the nation.

In addition to the contrast between scholars and naturalists, all the contrasts between one-sided parties still exist in our literature. There are journals exclusively for Catholics and Protestants, as well as for the sects which have separated from each, for the various schools of medicine, &c. They are the arenas of controversy.

Yet it is to be lamented, that parties are not nearly enough concentrated. This is caused by the circumstance of their adherents being so much scattered. We have no great metropolis, but only a number of universities and other polished cities, which, separated from one another by hundreds of miles, form a concert of criticism, which is far too many-toned. Instead therefore of one good journal, we have ten middling ones of the same party; instead of one pervading consistent view, we have ten different shades of opinion; instead of one great party interest, we have ten personal interests.

It is remarkable, that for more than a hundred years, clear-headed individuals have endeavoured to introduce an unity into this confusion of opinions, and to place criticism in a higher position,

from which it might survey the literature as a whole. Thomasius, who has already been so honourably mentioned in the second volume of this, work, was the first who endeavoured to do this about the end of the seventeenth century. He excited a great noise; he met the sternest opposition; he was persecuted by all the faculties, and died without leaving any worthy successor. But he had succeeded in replacing the Latin by the German language, in making a hundred bigoted prejudices give way to freer and more independent opinions, and in paving the way for the introduction of the French literature into Germany, though the Germans did not, as he intended, borrow from it its unfettered spirit, but only its tasteless fashions and licentious customs. When this French taste had become all-powerful, Godsched, during the first half of last century, undertook the judicial office of critic. He was courageously opposed by the Grecomanists and Anglomanists. Yet Lessing was the man who gave the death-blow to the old pedantry. But as this noble spirit occupied himself principally with the trifles of art, with antiquarian studies, and threw only stray beams upon the wide domain of literature, without subjecting it as a whole to a systematic review, Nicolai undertook, in his Universal German Library (*Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*), this huge labour. Though he was, beyond all doubt, enlightened by the spirit of Lessing, and though he victoriously opposed the universal precedence given to Latin, the starched prejudices, prolixity in style, &c., thus rendering

himself exceedingly useful to the enlightenment of the age, yet he gave himself too much up to a mysterious dogmatism on everything which, as the property of the mind, did not correspond with the intellect, at that time all powerful; or as the property of a deep, religious, and popular poetry did not suit modern frivolity. This was the reason that the great proportion of the immense critical labour of this Library was intrusted to very mediocre assistants.

Romanticism now asserted its rights in opposition to these men. Goethe and Schiller published the Hours (*Horen*); the Schlegels started the Athenæum. The Nicolaitans were cast down from their throne; their intellect found its level, and sunk in the sand of Berlin. A new enthusiasm for art, nay, even for religion, threw into oblivion the good which the despised Nicolaitans had intended, and even partly affected. Yet there was formed no enduring and unconditioned institution of romanticism. One alternated with another; all soon perished. Criticism was divided between the learned and the fashionable journals. The spirit of letters, the taste for old pedantry had so far emancipated itself in the province of learning, that almost every university, and almost every science, published a critical journal, in which the numerous new works of scholars were announced and reviewed with a dignity borrowed not merely from the rank of the author, but even from the contents of the work. But several of these institutions gradually lost their credit. The men who at first wrote able

articles, became old, and peevish, or lazy, yet unwilling to demit their office; they took in partizans and assistants, who, continuing in the old beaten path, often supplied the place of spirit with a mere outward resemblance. On the other hand, the fashionable journals, devoting themselves exclusively to the larger portion, the women of the reading public, accommodated themselves to their fashionable taste, and thus fell into a triviality, which was far inferior to the Hamburg Dramaturgy, the Hours, or the Athenæum.

It was only by a combination of such circumstances, that a man like Müllner could so long have set up for the tyrant of the belles lettres. Without principle, without conviction, without taste, of a very superficial knowledge, but coarse and cunning, and far from nice in the choice of his means, he was clever enough to terrify the lovers of peace, to flatter the people, and to imbue many with a share of his private favouritisms and malices. The high degree in which he suited the public taste proves, that his tone still retained its sway, at least in theatrical criticism. He never thought of anything but of satisfying his vanity and his love of revenge, and of public scandal in general, by which he, by means of the most shameless wit, always endeavoured like Punch, to raise the laugh against his opponents. So far was he from even thinking of any higher aim, that he never excited the attention of the scientific public; but, on this very account, he, like a cock on his own dunghill, felt himself more at home in the department of the belles lettres.

Yet notwithstanding all the noise he made, he is now nearly forgotten.

Brockhaus of Leipzig, a man who was praiseworthy in many respects, endeavoured to supply a want felt by the age, by establishing, in addition to his world-renowned Conversations-Lexicon, which was intended to give in an alphabetical order, all kinds of knowledge for all ranks, a Conversations-Paper, the present Papers for Literary Entertainment (*Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*), in which works of all kinds, learned as well as light, should be analyzed for the use of all ranks. It is a pity that the principles of this criticism were as varied as their objects, that the numerous reviews which poured from all quarters into these papers, were as varied in their opinions, as if they had appeared in a hundred different papers.

These critical efforts, which did not proceed from learning, made the learned sensible that they must found something new. The literary gazettes were become powerless from old age. Everyone felt that there was need of the energy of a critical principle. A journal was projected which should hold by a definite system. After many fruitless attempts, the Berlin Annals for Scientific Criticism (*Berliner Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik*), on the principles of the Hegelian philosophy, were instituted; yet even this journal could obtain a circulation only by adopting an historical eclecticism, and by reconciling, by means of a prudent and profound historical criticism, where the philosophical dictator-

ship gave offence. Hegel died; the historical tendency remained; but the sought-for mental unity, in which alone a ruling authority can be founded, was not thereby attained; neither was there gained an overpowering influence in the whole domain of science. There arose, in addition to the many other critical journals, a new one, which, by a new care, and a new and improved style, was advantageously distinguished, when compared with the vulgar routine and polemical controversy of some of its predecessors; but there was no unity gained for the anarchy of learning; nay, there was not even an enthusiasm awakened.

My own critical labours commenced about the same time as those of the *Blätter* of Brockhaus, and the Berlin Jahrbücher. Literature, then lay before me, like a boundless chaos, into which I was to introduce some kind of order. At that time no survey had been taken of this world of books. The nation did not know its own richness, far less could it separate the evil from the good. We had no grand combination, no comparison of different works. Time-honoured custom and new fashions, party-spirit, the cunning tricks of coteries, or the personal insolence of individuals, gave a power and dominion to tendencies, which, being thoroughly pernicious, repressed others which should have met with more respect. The public were pleased with everything, because they had no general comparative views. Amidst the universal confusion, they followed the second best, and where by means of

reading-rooms they were accustomed to see many journals, and consequently to hear the most opposite opinions, literature began to be degraded from an instructor, which it had formerly been, and was intended always to be, to a mere amusement;—nay, many practical men turned altogether away from this chaotic literature.

In this state of things, a general revision of our literature, especially of that of modern times, was very necessary, so as to render more easy the survey of the world of books, which was daily increasing, and by the discovery of the Good, the Great, and the Beautiful, to throw aside all unnecessary ballast, and discard what was wholly bad.

Led on by an irresistible craving of feelings of the deepest and most profound nature, I ventured to attempt this task. It was necessary that I should see my way clearly amidst this confusion, and that I should oppose with a firm front, everything that caused and daily magnified the confusion, the folly, and the desecration of so much that was noble and excellent. I saw that a sophistry of the intellect and the heart, a spirit of lying, a fashionable vulgarity, had forced its way into the highest spheres of science and art—crimes which were not sufficiently excused in my eyes by the halo lent them by the great names of those who practised them. I saw that on that very account a truly healthful working from above, from those higher spheres, was hemmed in and confined to the lower ranks of the great majority of the public. I saw how in the lower ranks, vul-

garity diffused itself in our fashionable literature, and, regardless of every higher object, hunted only for the frivolous amusement of a day. I saw how religion was desecrated by superstition and unbelief,—morals by prudery and secret immorality,—science by an affectation of omniscience and real ignorance,—art by an odorous over-refinement and coarse slavish adherence to nature, —right feeling by servilism and rebellious inclinations,—patriotism by a love of what is silly and foreign. But it was not enough to oppose them with all my power; the requisite for this was clearness of intellect, and a consciousness of innocence and rectitude.

Having for twenty years devoted my time and labour to the unwearied study of the history of the people, as well as of the literature of Germany, I imagined that I ought to weigh every single author and book in connection both with the age in which the author lived, and with the science or art to which the book belonged. This external connection must always be kept in view, though some single works may be subjected to a criticism which looks only to themselves and their intrinsic merits. The principles by which we must decide, possess a double power, if they be deprived both of the universal judgments of reason and taste, and of their historical connection.

It would be giving myself much unnecessary trouble, were I to say anything about the way in which my labours have been received by my contemporaries. I need not therefore recapitulate with how many parties and coteries, and with what

hosts of vulgarities, I have come in contact. The effervescence must have time to settle. It is at present in its most excited state, as my old enemies, whose ranks have been thinned by defeats and deaths, have been all of a sudden recruited by my juniors and imitators. I am sorry that I have produced this young fry of critics, who, without ever thinking of my long labours, talk with the most presumptuous ignorance in my confident style, thus overflowing the whole province of journalism; yet it was not possible not to produce them, for what novelty, what fruit of a long and laborious toil is not immediately aped by the pride and presumption of the young? The only thing I could do, was, not to allow myself to be disturbed in my good work by such a *pecus imitatorum*. I do not want either mediators, who attempt to find a *juste milieu* between my truth and the old-fashioned lies, nor blockheads, who try to surpass my strength by an all-destroying rage. I am quite aware that every reformer in every province of science met with these two kinds of disciples, nay, I believe they are unavoidable; but I will not fall into the mistake of acknowledging them, so that it may not fall out with me, as with the Persian Zohak, who, being kissed on the shoulder by the devil, had two insatiable serpents growing out from the spots touched by the devil's lips. My hands shall remain clean.

The watchword of the new league which has been entered into against me is *immorality*. All who oppose me have adopted this impure element. Their watchword is sensuality; the adherents of

Goethe in Berlin and the Parisian *Jeune Allemagne* extend to them the hand of fellowship. The polemical controversy against me, which had hitherto been confined to personalities of the vulgarest kind, will gain the *status* of a great contest of principles in the province of taste.

Everything is pretty clear in the domain of scientific criticism. Knowledge, which is profound and complete, decides concerning what is shallow and fragmentary, or, in despite of better knowledge, about the interests of their sophistry; so that if we but know what their interests are, we always know what we are about.

The criticism of taste is alone indistinct, independent of definite science and definite practical interests; and though it, like everything else, follows the spirit of the age, yet we find caprice reigning in it in countless contrasts, and modified by every degree of culture and talent. Here every one wishes to speak; no one acknowledges any law; each, careless of the firm element of the Objective, realizes his own views in the fluid and transitory element of the Subjective.

Tastes are, and will always remain, different by nature. In our age, which has attained the highest degree of culture, they must range in yet more various ways and take still stronger directions; partly in the most stiff and formal onesidedness, partly in the oddest elective affinities of the most heterogeneous things.

Yet a separation becomes gradually discernible amid this chaos of taste. The sensuous and the moral feelings begin, where the feelings alone, in-

dependent of science, can determine to form a still more striking contrast.

The two extremes, between which the middle ranks formerly went on their undisturbed way, gradually approached, and threw themselves together into the middle. The church and its adjuncts were formerly exceeding strict and attentive to morals; the court and the aristocracy were, on the other hand, very sensual. The people, who stood between the two parties, participated neither in the excessive strictness of the one, nor in the licentiousness of the other. They were moral, yet they enjoyed themselves; they were dissipated, but honourable. But as the church as well as the aristocracy have gradually permitted that wall of separation which divided them from the people, to fall, and have opened themselves up to the people, the qualities which formerly characterized this rank alone, have been imparted to the mass of the people. In this way theological æstheticism became social prudery; aristocratical dissipation, social frivolity. The brave, yet often merry fathers, were succeeded by sons who were either more serious and moody, or more dissipated and pleasure-loving. That process which dissolves the bonds of rank is still going on, so that the separation of the leaders of fashion into a prudish and a frivolous party, will increase, and will probably last, till a true medium is again found,—a medium which will, in all probability, be attained, not by literary criticism, but by the universal reorganization of disorganized society.

Sensuality soon passed over from defence to

attack. It was formerly more unfettered among the privileged laity, beside the ecclesiastical moral severity, than it was at an after period, when an universal prudery became all-powerful. Formerly foolish carnival amusements were carried on close beside the church, in the same way as in courts, the unmannerly court-fool took his place beside the upper court-chaplain. This, however, ceased. Many of the pleasures and joys of the laity were put an end to by Protestantism, and a dark spirit of severity was engendered. The courts and the nobles alone did not yield to this. The jealousy of the burghers, of the scholars, undertook the office of censor of public morals; the noble were not grudged their privileges. Then came the just, and, we may say, patriotic wrath, which burned at the corrupt morals of the noble —the reaction against the Gallomania. Agreeable and cheerful men, like Wieland, Thümmel, &c., defended themselves against these restrictions, and Goethe used all his immense influence in repelling the moralists in every way. A frivolity of an entirely new kind becoming master, reigned the more securely, the more it was concealed by a poetical veil, the more its immoral spirit was hid under an amiable hypocrisy, like the working of a slow poison in some sweetmeat. The great wars carried on against France recalled us to serious reflection. Patriotism purified the hearts and sharpened the views of those who had been sunk in pleasure. The serpent, which had been concealed under the blossom, was now brought to view. There were, however, partly, still multi-

tudes of pleasure-seeking men of a past generation; partly, the stagnation after the great wars produced a lazy luxury; partly, men were again infected with a new and furious Gallomania, steeped in the most licentious sensuality. On the other hand, patriotism, that noble spirit, which had roused the people against France, and was not yet subsided, armed itself and entered into a league with the pious tendency which theology had again assumed.

Many, however, who were placed in the middle, fancied that they must defend sensuality, to the end that morality might not prejudice the freedom which, they were determined, should at all hazards be granted to art.

We are at present in this situation. We use, on the one hand, an immense philosophical and poetical system of dialectics, so as, by means of art, to gain the command of literature to immoral inclinations, partly as a principal affair and real aim, partly as a secondary affair, which is always inseparable from art, in order to excuse, under all circumstances, the liberty of art. On the other hand, however, the eye is no less acute, in seeing through all these illusions and excuses, in parrying all the feints, in rendering of none avail all the diversions, and keeping a firm hold of the limits beyond which the liberty of art must not range, if it do not wish to destroy religion and morality which are its own firmest supports. The sensuous and moral feelings must be at one in art; they must bear with each other, in as far as each does not by autocracy and onesided-

ness, destroy the other. If the moral feelings wished to repress that innocent expression of cheerful and pleasant sensuality, art, which has a sensual, as certainly as it has a moral principle, would perish. But the controversy can never be brought to a close, unless sensuality make the same concession to morality.

Material interests,—an industry clever at inventing pleasures,—unsatisfied political passions, which precipitate themselves into the abyss of sensual excesses,—an acquaintance with the refined and coarse carouses of all nations and ages, will, doubtless, long support the æsthetical sophistry, which contends for sensuality. Yet the attempts to give it a supreme sway, as well as to found upon it a new heathen sensual mythology, and, by the complete victory of materialism, to overthrow the spiritual nature of Christianity, the belief in one invisible God and in the immortality of the soul, will fail, at least in Germany.

The aim (*sensuality*) is an excrescence of a diseased, dissatisfied, and passionate age, which will soon pass away. The means (*æsthetics*) is only the afterbirth of an age already past. The whole phenomenon is a league of young extravagances with old pedantry. The former must bend away into the great stream of political life, and the important settlement of the wavering state of the great European and German questions will direct men's attention to something more important than the satisfying the desires of the senses. The others will soon die away. The

more the nation becomes a nation, the more will the old literary aristocracy wear away; nay, they will, in the end, really perish of their unpopularity, of which they are already sick even unto death.

This bond of alliance between a wild youth and a criticising old age will soon be put an end to by an age of manly power and talent. Germany is approaching by a slow but sure path to a position from which she will be able to dictate to the rest of Europe. Then we shall hear no more of the diseased convulsions of our time; and the frivolous dissipation and affected would-be-wise speculations, which are now the common talk of the day, will be no more thought of.

The relapse of our literature into the Anglomania and Gallomania, the excesses and over-refined affectation of our philosophy, which have been punished by the most decided unpopularity, the epidemic abortions of our poetry, and even in a material respect, the unnatural increase of our literary productions, are a disease, which, having attacked only the literary portion of the nation, are in direct contradiction to the prosperity of German interests, which are, in other respects, healthy and natural. It is only upon paper that the nation is sick; they are healthy enough in real life. The increasing interest which is taken in politics, the mighty sympathy for the national prosperity, which, having been once awakened, is now irresistible, the persuasion of the reality of that power which Germany would possess were she united,—a persuasion which is ripening slowly,

and, as it were modestly, though on that account all the more surely, foreshadow to us a noble future, the reality of which will chase away the idle dreams of literature.

The dominion of literary extremes of every kind was a consequence of internal uncomfortableness,—of a state in which the Old could no longer, the New could not rightly, succeed,—in which thousands of powers fermented through one another, without ever being able to unite harmoniously. Such an age never occurred before, and will, probably, never occur again. This glittering luxuriance of opposing ideas contains within it all the power and all the richness of a past age, as well as the germs of a new one, but they are in complete anarchy. It is the chaos of culture.

In a patriotic interest alone will a new and firm crystallization commence here. This interest was most despised and forgotten; so that it is now the youngest and freshest. We must return from the wide desert of the universe and our wanderings into foreign lands, from the petty Krähwinkel and the study in which we sit, to the feeling of nationality. We must return from the mental extravagance which aims only at heaven or the Absolute and all mankind, from the selfishness of private favouritism, to the feeling of our duties as citizens. We must return from the courtliness of privileged genius and the humility of the honest but silly citizen, to a patriotic feeling of honour; in one word, all our consciousness and all our interests must be reduced to the consciousness that we

belong to, and to the high interests of, a great nation.

Many fancy that freedom, if modelled after the examples and conceptions of other countries, forms the real centre of the future crystallization in the variegated fluid of our minds. They are wrong. Freedom, powerful as is its thought, is subordinate to the higher and nobler thought of nationality, so that we can arrive at the former only through the latter, or only at some new by-way.

Many fancy that religion is that centre. They are deceived. Its distractions were, and always are, nothing but the mournful consequences of a debased nationality; and the church cannot become again young till this nationality has renovated its youth.

Many imagine that science and art form this centre. But they too want their most fruitful soil, their fairest sun, if they be not connected with nationality. All their errors arise from this estrangement.

Life, from which literature has torn itself free, is become imperceptibly powerful, so that it now compels literature to serve it. Authors long accustomed to hunt after phantoms and favourite objects with utter selfishness, see themselves surprised by the awakening spirit of the people, which is beginning to pervade literature for the ends of the people, and no longer merely to transform it for the amusement of private individuals.

The wall of separation between the learned and

the unlearned, the fashionable and vulgar literature, is now broken down; and though both are not yet amalgamated into one national literature, a beginning has been made, and time will do the rest. Journalism will make rapid advances on this path, and will in this way always connect more closely the two halves of the public.

Should not the learned, who are immersed in their scientific studies, take an interest in what the rest of the people are doing? Should they not draw from life itself fresh strength, which might again have a retro-active effect upon life? Is it not their task to impart to the people, that nobler spirit which they cherish, to enable the people to enjoy the fruits of their thinking, and to elevate them from the vulgarity of their notions and inclinations? And ought not the people to know what the scholars are doing? Have they not a right to claim the advantages of a higher culture imparted to them by the learned? Are not the learned a committee of the people? Have they not, as members, certain duties to perform? Is learning the property of a caste or of the nation? Is not a great part of the superiority of England and France based upon the circumstance of there not being in these countries two kinds of literature for two different classes, but only one literature for all the educated men of the nation? Is not a great part of the anarchy of opinions, of the gigantic errors which pervade every subject, of the awkwardness on every occasion when a national judgment should be given, caused in Germany by the want of a literature accessible to and

understood by all classes of society, by the separation of the learned from the unlearned world? We are sensible of this, and are, therefore, now doing our best to remedy the evil.

The numerous journals which are read even in our smallest towns and in the country, the reading societies, which are daily increasing in number, the Conversations-Lexicons, the Penny Magazines, the German Bridgewater Treatises, the popular libraries and manuals for every branch of practical science, and the cheap editions of classic authors, labour unremittingly among the masses of the people, and fill them with a general culture, which may, perhaps, appear too various, but yet which is but taken as it is given; for each only takes what is most necessary or best fitted for himself.

Those classes, the great majority of which consists of working men, have been lately seized hold of by an idea which is more powerful and more pregnant, and which will exercise a greater influence, even over literature, than many may be inclined to imagine. The idea and its realization were one. All are surprised by the result. The custom-house league, and the railways, have concentrated our material interests. All interests must henceforth follow this concentric tendency.

Foreign nations are ready to acknowledge the Future which slumbers in Germany. If we do not soon comprehend this ourselves, the wonder and fear of our neighbours will teach it to us.

To assist in solving the problem of German history in so interesting a period of development,

appeared to me so sacred a duty, that to do it I did not hesitate to stir up many enemies among my contemporaries. A revision of literature such as that which I have attempted, appears to me necessary. But does not the age hasten rapidly forwards? Is not generation pressing after generation? Will not the many-coloured tendencies of yesterday, which stand so close to me, among which I have grown up, in which I take, either through love or dislike, such a warm interest, very soon appear strange, faded, and indifferent, to coming generations? Will not the thousandfold tendencies of spirit, which I have so attentively followed out, be treated in a more summary manner by posterity, and the minor details be forgotten, when engaged with the more one-sided and important interests of the future? And will not this book, which I now finish,—a book which my opponents take such pleasure in giving out as a destructive one, be then looked upon rather as a conservative work, as a collection of recollections, which would otherwise have been scattered far and wide, and as a vindication of the manifold merits of the German literature in ages which may at some future period be looked upon not as the happiest and most glorious of German history, and the merits of which men will be but too much inclined to undervalue, when compared with the more glorious future? The blindness of the present to its own crimes is commonly punished by a blindness shown by the future to the virtues of the past. Thus the philosophical century was blind to the virtues of the middle ages,

because they had been blind to their own faults. Our own age, too, will one day be far more severely criticised by the future than has been here done by me; in finishing my work, therefore, I would rather be looked upon as the defender, than as the accuser of mine own age.

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THE END OF VOL. IV.

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CORRIGENDA.

VOL. IV.

Page 8. l. 10 from bottom, for 'Mask' read 'Mark.'
p. 20. l. 12 from top, for 'lands' read 'hands.'
p. 46. l. 5 from bottom, for 'Punsh' read 'Punch.'
p. 106. l. 2 from bottom, for 'of' read 'with.'
p. 139. l. 10 from top, after 'less' insert 'of.'
p. 178. note 9 for 'Pfenyst' read 'Pfingst.'
p. 189. l. 16 from bottom, dele 'baron.'
p. 235. l. 12 from top, dele 'the will.'
p. 277. l. 6 from bottom, for 'least' read 'last.'
p. 288. l. 11 from top, for 'Byronian' read 'Byronism.
p. 300. in note, read 'et post equitem sedet atra cura.'
p. 306. l. 16 from top, read 'De la Mennais.'
p. 316. l. 4 dele comma after 'this.'
p. 325. l. 7 from top, for 'exceeding' read 'exceedingly.'

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